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MEET OUR EXPERTS



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Sacre-Dallerup**
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desserts on p102.



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available on iPad
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LEARN THE LINGO

Sant  means
'health' in French.
So here's to your
Top Health!

Happiness is...

THIS IS A FABULOUS TIME OF YEAR, with nature going through just as spectacular a change as it does in spring. The trees treat us to a vibrant show of yellows, oranges, reds and browns. And, although it's certainly cooler, we often get bright sunny days, which, instead of being stiflingly sweaty like in summer, are refreshing and invigorating, especially if you go out for a run or brisk walk. There's nothing I love more than going out for a woodland walk and breathing in that distinctive peaty-earth smell coupled with the refreshing negative ions in the air if it's been raining.

So, this issue we decided not only to celebrate all things autumnal, but to help you keep mind, body and spirit happy all winter long, from **appreciating the simple things in life (p28)**, to **taking inspiration from cultures around the world, and how they achieve happiness (p44)**.

Although the days are definitely shorter, it's still crucial to get outside as much as possible, whether sunny or not, not only for your fitness level but your internal body clock. **Find out why sunlight plays such a crucial role in your wellbeing on p12.**

Whatever you get up to this month, I hope you'll find lots of reasons to celebrate and feel happy.

Katy x @RealKatyLouise

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[TopSanteUK](https://www.instagram.com/TopSanteUK) or [/TopSantemagazine](https://www.facebook.com/TopSantemagazine)



p28

Take time to savour the
simple things in life.



p102

Our healthy, low-sugar
desserts will satisfy
your sweet tooth!



p18

Cutting down on
sugar could help
you feel happier.

THE TOP SANT  MANIFESTO

At *Top Sant * we believe every woman has the ability to maximise her health and beauty at any age and regardless of her health history. With a balanced diet, effective exercise and a positive mindset, you can stay younger for longer, inside and out. We'll bring you the latest information regarding wellbeing,

fitness, food and beauty, empowering you to make informed choices now and for your future health. What's gone before can't be undone or redone, so leave it in the past and focus on what you can change today. We're here to help you on that path to better health, one small step at a time.

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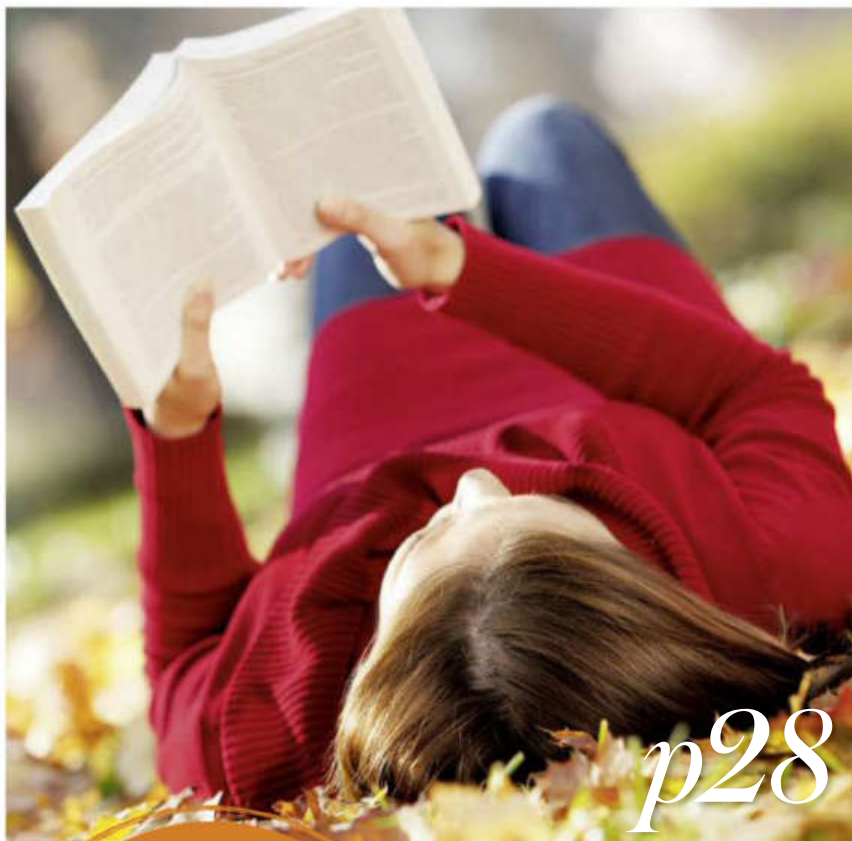
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SUBSCRIBE FOR ONLY £26
and get a Weleda Oat Hair
Care gift set. See p48.





FREE!

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¹Cetraben Cream patient preference study, Sept 2013

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YOUR HEALTHY November

Get off to a positive start this month with the latest health, wellbeing, food and beauty news.



BRING WARMTH AND LIGHT INTO YOUR LIFE

Wrap up warm, gather your loved ones and spend an evening huddled around a bonfire – after all, it's good for your health!

A study by the University of Alabama reports that the warm glow and crackling sounds of a fire can lower blood pressure and ease stress. Researchers believe this is because our primal ancestors used fire to provide heat, help with hunting, ward off predators and illuminate the dark. The fire was the centre of the community and represented nurturing, food and safety. Although most of us no longer cook around a fire,

kitchens are still the heart of any home, where families gather to share a glass of vino.

As this month includes not only bonfire night but also the Hindu/Sikh/Jain festival of Diwali, celebrating the triumphs of light over darkness, why not bring this celebratory spirit into your own back garden? Ready-made firepits are available from most garden

centres, meaning there's no need to scorch your lawn with a traditional bonfire. So, gather your nearest and dearest for a soul-soothing evening, letting the heat warm your hands and heart.



A traditional Diwali light.

HEALTHY BONFIRE FOOD

Instead of toasting marshmallows around the fire, why not opt for roasted bananas instead? Simply slice open their skins and add dark chocolate buttons or cocoa nibs for a warm, gooey magnesium and antioxidant-packed treat! Wrap in foil, stick on a fork, roast for 10-15 mins, then enjoy!



Get out there!

Four out of five people agree that taking a spontaneous trip boosts their happiness, according to a recent survey. Two thirds said it makes them more productive at work, while 68 per cent believed that it reduced stress. The survey by booking.com, which quizzed more than 6,000 people across six countries about their attitude towards spontaneity, also revealed that we tend to unleash our inner child when away, which helps us to stay young and carefree.

THE HOUSE OF HAPPINESS

If the dark days of winter get you down, why not live in a glass house to benefit from more light? It might sound mad, but a London-based company is producing transparent houses with walls made entirely of 'switchable glass', meaning you can turn the panes dark for privacy. Named Photon Spaces, the dwellings, created by architectural glazing company Cantifix Ltd, are designed to boost the health and morale of occupants by letting in maximum daylight while blocking harmful UV. But, they don't heat up like greenhouses. You can order one for a cool £285,000 – just don't throw any stones! Visit thephotonspace.com.



MUSIC FOR PAIN RELIEF

Going to hospital might not be anyone's favourite activity, but it could be made much more pleasant thanks to the power of music. Researchers have found that patients who listen to music before, after and even during surgery are less anxious and subsequently need less pain relief following their ops. The team at Queen Mary University of London reviewed 70 trials, involving 7,000 patients. All had varying conditions and listened mostly to soothing, classical music while in

hospital for their surgery.

A further study is now being carried out at the Royal London Hospital. There, 40 women having either a caesarean section or a hysteroscopy will listen to their own playlist, connected to a pillow with built-in loudspeakers. The results will determine whether they experience reduced levels of pain throughout their stay compared to those who don't listen to music. Watch this space!



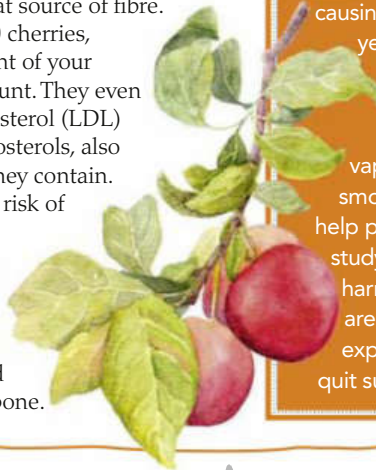
Superfood of the month... *cherries*

Cherries make a delicious snack that packs a punch when it comes to health benefits.

Anthocyanins, powerful antioxidants, are found in pigment, and cherries are a pigment-rich fruit. They're crammed with anti-inflammatory, anti-viral and anti-cancer properties – the same properties found in aspirin and ibuprofen.

Cherries are also a great source of fibre. There's 1.4g in around 10 cherries, which is nearly 10 per cent of your recommended daily amount. They even help to reduce 'bad' cholesterol (LDL) levels thanks to the phytosterols, also known as plant sterols, they contain. These help to lower your risk of cancer and stimulate the immune system.

Finally, cherries contain boron, which increases bone health by promoting formation and recuperation of existing bone.



+ HEALTH: THEN & NOW

We look at how healthcare advice and practices have advanced over decades and even centuries! This month, smoking...

1930 In the UK from the 1930s to the 1950s, people believed smoking was good for you and most cigarette brands were endorsed by doctors!

2015 We've known about the cancer-causing dangers of tobacco for many years, and in 2007 smoking was banned in indoor public places in England. Today, we have e-cigarettes, battery-powered vaporisers that simulate the feeling of smoking, but without the tobacco, to help people quit smoking. A recent study* found they are 95 per cent less harmful than tobacco. However, they are still a little controversial and some experts recommend other ways to quit such as hypnotherapy.

'Being happy doesn't mean everything is perfect, it means that you've decided to look beyond the imperfections.'

Musician,
Gerard Way

COPPER FIRMING MIST

Keep your skin hydrated against the drying effects of central heating this winter with iS Clinical's new natural face mist. The Copper Firming Mist is a refreshing treatment that provides potent antioxidant protection and defends against the signs of ageing, while firming, hydrating and smoothing your skin. The copper helps to regulate sebum production and stimulate collagen, while guarana extract helps to tone skin. £32, face thefuture.co.uk.



6 The number of hours spent in social contact per day needed for optimum levels of happiness.**

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Lower your cholesterol naturally

Some of the world's leading doctors are calling for an end to the widespread prescription of statins. They warn that one in four Britons will soon be at risk of terrible side effects including diabetes, cataracts, impotence, muscle pains, mental impairment, fatigue and liver dysfunction from the drugs, which are designed to help keep cholesterol levels in check.

For a more natural way to keep your cholesterol levels low, stanols and sterols found in plant-based foods such as nuts, seeds, vegetables and legumes can help reduce cholesterol, along with foods containing beta-glucan, a dietary fibre found in porridge oats.

KAT'S NAP CORNER

Features editor and self-professed terrible sleeper, Katherine Watt, tests snooze-inducing remedies to find what really works.



What is it? The Chillow, from chillow.co.uk (£27.50).

How does it promote sleep?

The Original Chillow is a unique cooling pad. Just 2cm thick, it slips into your pillowcase on top of your regular pillow. There's no electricity or refrigeration needed. You simply fill it with four pints of tap water, which is fully absorbed. You then remove any excess air by gently rolling it to create a vacuum before putting the stopper in. Water is a very good conductor of heat and so wicks heat away from your head into the saturated water core and then out into the air around you. It stays cool for

up to three hours. It's reusable – just leave in top of your pillow in the morning and it's ready within an hour.

Kat's verdict: The Chillow keeps cool in a nice 'just turned the hot pillow over' kind of way. Having my head cooler stopped my body overheating, which often wakes me up in the night. My partner loved it too. He suffers from allergic rhinitis and cluster headaches, and the Chillow kept him clear-headed and decongested. He slept his best in a long time.

Overall rating:



BEING YOUR OWN BOSS MAKES YOU HAPPIER

Working for yourself may initially feel daunting, but becoming an entrepreneur can make you happier and healthier, according to research from accounting software company Xero. A survey of more than 1,000 UK entrepreneurs revealed 95 per cent of them were happier running their own business, 90 per cent also enjoyed a better quality of life and 86 per cent said working for themselves had improved their health and wellbeing.





Let there be LIGHT

Our bodies need light, but during winter we get limited amounts.

With shorter days and darker nights now upon us, we look at alternative ways you can boost your quota for more get up and glow!

MANFRED MANN was blinded by it, Madonna sang about its rays, and, more recently, Ellie Goulding mentioned it 36 times within one song of the same name. Second only to love, light is probably the most sung about, written about and painted phenomena of our universe. And it's no wonder, as numerous studies have shown just how

important it is for our physical, mental and emotional health.

Like love, we need light to survive. Not only does it allow you to see the world in which you live, but it controls your internal body clock. The reason for this is that sunlight exposure controls the production of melatonin, which is the hormone that regulates your sleep/wake cycle.

How it works is that by getting lots of sunlight during the day, your body

is able to produce enough melatonin at night so you fall asleep. Exposure to light in the morning stimulates nerve pathways between your retinas and the hypothalamus in your brain. There, the suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN) sends signals to the other parts of your brain that control hormones, temperature and other functions that help you to feel either wide awake or sleepy. The SCN delays the release of melatonin until night-time. So, when the sun goes down, the SCN switches on the pineal gland – a tiny gland in the centre of your brain – so it begins producing melatonin, which is released into your bloodstream. This process is meant to kick-in around 9pm, with melatonin staying high until first light the next morning, dropping off completely by around 9am.

'As soon as you wake up, try to go outside or at least look out of the window, as this helps to kick-start your energy and stop melatonin production,' says medical research scientist and expert in light waves, Leanne Venier.

It helps if you sit next to a window at work, too. 'Research in 2014 showed

that office workers who sat next to windows had higher melatonin levels later at night, meaning better sleep,' says Leanne.

However, scientists have more recently discovered that it's the blue rays of the visible light spectrum – made up of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet – that are responsible for regulating your melatonin and therefore circadian rhythm, and not the rest of the coloured wavelengths. 'When you are exposed to blue light it tells your body to stop producing melatonin. So, when you don't get enough natural sunlight, which contains blue rays, during the day, you end up with low levels of melatonin at night,' says Leanne.

Because blue wavelengths are shorter than the other colours, they don't penetrate clouds so well, which is why

you get more blue wavelengths when it's sunny – and why the sky is blue! 'It's still important to get outside even when it's overcast, as the brightness level is always higher than it will be indoors under artificial light,' says Leanne.

It was only in 1998 that researchers discovered the existence of

photoreceptors in our eyes that detect this particular range of blue waves. Researchers at the University of Greenwich tested a theory that working under 'blue-enriched' light might be better for employees. In a two-month study, workers reported they felt happier, and more alert and productive.

But, when you're exposed to blue light at night-time, sleep

problems can occur. 'Your eyes can't distinguish between the natural blue wavelengths of daylight and the blue light emitted from digital devices,' explains Leanne. 'In effect, blue light from electrical sources matches that from the sky. So if you look at a screen at night, your eyes think it's the middle of the day and you start shutting off melatonin production. Artificial indoor lighting is also usually bright enough to prevent melatonin being released.'

'Humans are not designed to live this way. In caveman times, we couldn't afford to be tired during the day as our survival depended upon staying alert. This is why we need to be active and outdoors during daylight hours.'

HEAL YOUR BODY

Melatonin isn't only a 'sleep-inducing' hormone, it plays other important roles. 'High levels are needed during sleep to help repair bodily tissues. This is due to the antioxidant effect of the melatonin,' says Leanne.

Antioxidants are not in fact substances, but chemicals – both naturally occurring and man-made – that behave in a certain way to slow cell damage. They donate electrons to what are called 'free radicals', which are unstable particles that would otherwise contribute to inflammation. In this unstable state, they cause oxidation. Just imagine what happens to an apple when left out on the countertop and you'll get the picture. Stabilising the cells by donating an electron to them, counteracts this oxidative process.

Exposure to blue light in the day can boost melatonin levels at night, helping you have a better night's sleep.

Full-spectrum light

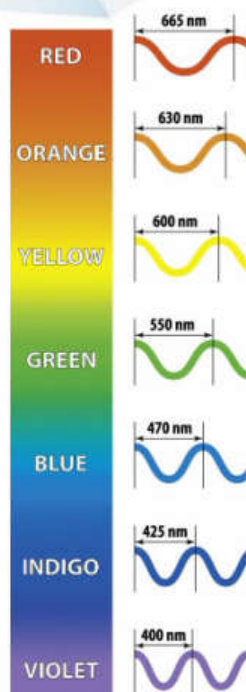
So what actually is light? Put simply, it's an electromagnetic wave. The word light actually refers to full-spectrum, visible light, which is made up of all the colours of the rainbow, together creating what we see as white light. Refracting white light through a prism – a transparent pyramid with flat, polished surfaces – is the best way to see all the colours.

Infrared and ultraviolet, which go off the ends of the visible light spectrum, should technically be called radiation, not light, as they are not visible to humans.

Wavelengths are measured in nanometres (nm). Visible light lies roughly between 400 and 700nm and each wave creates a different colour. Red has the longest wavelength and violet the shortest.

The reason humans are good at seeing detail is because of the high density of colour-sensitive cells in our retinas, which produce high-quality images needing only a small amount of light. These cells also play a major role in how we see colour.

Scientists believe our eyes filter out the ultraviolet rays to improve visual clarity. Most animals and insects are able to see more frequencies, including ultraviolet. Experts are discovering more and more ways to use different types of light and radiation to help treat a plethora of health conditions.





The protective antioxidant effect afforded by the melatonin really can't be underestimated either. 'When melatonin levels are low, your chances of getting cancer are exponentially higher,' says Leanne. 'Numerous studies have been done in this area, including one lasting two decades, conducted in Sweden, which revealed that our probability of dying from cancer is in direct inverse correlation to the amount of sunlight we regularly receive. In short, if you don't get sunlight, your longevity is dramatically reduced.'

FEEL HAPPIER

It's at this time of year that cases of seasonal affective disorder (SAD) begin to rise. SAD is a medically recognised condition that affects people during the winter due to decreased light levels. It has similar symptoms to depression, such as lethargy, feeling down and being uninterested in life.

Doctors often prescribe light therapy to help ease symptoms of SAD. This involves sitting in front of a very large light box from 15 minutes up to a few hours a day. The original-style light boxes, which are still available, simulate full-spectrum daylight of around 10,000 lux (see roundel over the page) but without the ultraviolet rays, so they are not harmful to your skin or eyes – and no, you can't get a tan!

While these boxes can be effective, they are very bright and some people find them uncomfortable on the eyes. But there are newer alternatives. 'SAD sufferers no longer need a big clunky light box on their table or desk, running for hours at a time, as there are much smaller devices, about six inches square, that only emit the blue wavelengths of light, which are the only wavelengths responsible for reducing SAD symptoms,' says Leanne.

Blue-only boxes emit light at a far lower intensity than full-spectrum ones, which is gentler on the eyes. But, if you have an old-style light box, you'll still feel the benefits. 'Full-spectrum light boxes do work but it's only because they emit a small amount of blue light along with all the other colours, and you have to sit in front of them for much longer to be effective than you would with a blue light therapy device,' says Leanne. 'Using a big, old-tech, full-spectrum box is equivalent to using a record player or Walkman to play music. It'll still work, but nowadays much smaller MP3 players are available with better technology.'

SHINE YOUR LIGHT

Light is not only all around you but in you, too! It is made up of particles called photons, which carry energy. We absorb and trap this energy through the cells in our skin and eyes, which is converted into energy to communicate with other cells, then emitted back out into the world as biophotons. These are invisible to the naked eye. Biophotons have been researched since the 1970s but it was in 2009 that photos were published from a camera developed at Kyoto University in Japan, proving that humans do in fact emit light.

'Subjects sat in a pitch-black room with a long-exposure camera pointing at them. The resulting images showed tiny dots of lights – photons – emanating from their bodies and faces,' says Leanne. The brightest areas were around the cheeks, forehead and neck. 'This proves that we take in light, just as plants do. In fact, all living things have light in them and give off light.'

WHEN TO GO RED

'Numerous research studies conducted around the world, including those done by NASA, have looked into the benefits of red light and how it can heal on a cellular level,' reveals Leanne. In

a two-year clinical trial, cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy who developed oral mucositis (a painful ulceration and inflammation in the mouth caused by chemotherapy) were treated with red and near-infrared LED (light-emitting-diode) lights.

The study has since been repeated numerous times, so the outcome is now clear: the red light is responsible for relieving the pain of these lesions and helping them heal more quickly.'

The red part of the spectrum, including near-infrared, stimulates your mitochondria – the cells' generators – to produce more energy. 'Shining red light onto a cut, for example, helps the cells increase their energy production, thereby speeding up healing,' says Leanne. 'Different wavelengths do different jobs, but 660nm is one of the optimal

wavelengths for stimulating the mitochondria into action.'

Both red light and near-infrared, can also stimulate collagen formation to help plump up skin, hence why it is used in anti-ageing beauty

treatments. You can also halt a cold sore from forming with near-infrared at 1072nm.

'When held up to the affected area, the rays stimulate your immune

response to prevent the cold sore from coming to the

surface,' says Leanne, who recommends a

product called LipZor (£29.99, lipzor.net), to shine on the affected area at the first signs of the tingle. It's worth noting though that high doses of red light can be contraindicated for people with asthma, high blood pressure, heart disease or epilepsy.

Levels of lighting

Lux is the standard international unit of illuminance and luminous emittance, measuring luminous flux per unit area. One of the highest lux levels is a surface illuminated by direct sunlight, at up to 100,000 lux.

Outdoor daylight: 10,000-25,000 lux

Indoor light on an overcast day: 1,000 lux

Sunrise on a clear day: 400 lux

Office lighting: 320-500 lux

A dim hallway: 80 lux

Light reflected off the full moon: 0.027 lux.

'MY LIGHT BOX CHANGED MY LIFE.'

Jenny Scott-Thompson, 28, from London suffered from SAD for 10 years before being properly diagnosed.



I STARTED SUFFERING FROM depression in my late teens, with fairly noticeable external causes to start with, including problems with friends, a relationship break-up and exam stress. I was miserable most of the time, often crying myself to sleep and struggling at school. I went to my GP and a counsellor, but diagnosis of depression relied on symptoms such as loss of appetite and insomnia, and I had the opposite problems. I struggled through and went to Cambridge University to study maths. My final year was particularly tough. I got flu at the beginning of the winter, which meant I was behind in my work for the whole year and never really caught up. For a while I was referred back

and forth around various departments of the NHS, but didn't really recover until my exams were over and I could relax during the summer break. When autumn arrived I was feeling much more myself and got a job as a graduate IT consultant in London. I enjoyed the work, but still struggled with periods of exhaustion and misery that seemed so out of proportion to what was going on in my life.

During spring 2009, however, I noticed how much my mood and energy levels lifted after what had been a hard winter, despite nothing at work or in my personal life having changed. I spoke to my new GP about it and she diagnosed me with

SAD and recommended I use a light box and take a winter sun holiday. Both were incredibly effective. At first, I used my light box for the recommended half hour in the morning, but it wasn't enough, so I gradually increased the time to up to six hours a day. It made a huge difference to my energy and mood. Suddenly, I could be productive all winter long. Winter 2009/10 was the first time in six years I managed to go all the way from September to April without feeling suicidal – that might sound dramatic, but it's true. It was only then I realised how bad it had been before, and that not everyone is used to spending half the year hating themselves and wanting to die.

I still struggle with low moods from time to time, however, I continue to use my light box, keeping it on my desk while I'm working. Although I still secretly want to hibernate in winter, I no longer feel as tired at 3pm as I would at 2am in summer, which has made a huge difference to my quality of life and my sanity.



Spa treatments

A number of spas and clinics now offer light-based therapies, so why not book a healing treat to ward off the winter blues?

LUCKNAM PARK IN BATH offers Haslauer Reflective Sunlight Therapy. Sit back and relax in a room bathed in lights that replicate the change of light from sunrise to sunset. The treatment creates the feeling of a warm summer's day, promoting vitamin D production. From £30. Visit lucknampark.co.uk.

HYDROTHERM 3D MASSAGE allows you to lie face up on a water bed while being massaged and guided through a personalised visualisation. Coloured light is added to the therapy, such as red to boost motivation, blue for better communication or purple to uplift your spirits. Available in London, South Kent and East Sussex. See benbarnett.co.uk.

KODOBIO SENSORY THERAPY involves light and scent to improve your mood as well as lowering blood pressure and anxiety. Choose from three settings: bright, therapeutic light

teamed with lemon essential oil to enhance mood, bright light coupled with peppermint to energise, and soft light with lavender to ease anxiety. Available in selected UK spas. Find out more at kodobio.com.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Find out more about the medical applications and healing effects of blue, red and near-infrared light, as well as the benefits of sunlight, at Leanne Venier's website catalyticcolor.com.

BRIGHTEN UP

The **Lifemax SAD Therapy Light** is portable and utilises blue light. It doesn't flicker, so won't cause black spots on your eyes. It emits 14,000 lux within a 2.5cm range. £79.99, robertdyas.co.uk.



This **EnergyUp Energy Light** is the latest blue light device from Philips, providing a brightness of 10,000 lux. Just 15-30 minutes a day in front of it will provide maximum feel-good benefits. Even light distribution prevents bright spots. £150, philips.co.uk.



The **Lumie Arabica SAD Lamp Light Box** is a regular full-spectrum device providing a brightness of 10,000 lux at a distance of 25cm. It's best kept stationary and has a built-in stand. £99.95, lumie.com.



YOUR GUT IS A REMARKABLY clever system that plays a huge role in keeping your body healthy and your mind well. It's largely thanks to the millions of microbes that work together in your

intestines to create harmony, including a diverse range of bacteria, fungi and microorganisms called archaea. But, when your diet veers into unhealthy territory, from too much sugar or processed food for example, it can lead to an overgrowth of candida albicans, which belongs to the yeast family of fungi. Usually this yeast is beneficial in helping your body absorb nutrients, but when it proliferates and takes over it can compromise your immune system. Your body then begins to crave sweet and sugary foods to feed the yeast. But the more sugar you feed it, the more it grows, and so begins a vicious cycle whereby the candida is controlling your eating patterns and food choices, making it harder to avoid unhealthy snacks.

HOW TO SPOT THE SIGNS

Telltale symptoms of yeast overgrowth, known as candidiasis, include recurrent thrush, skin rashes, dandruff, fungal infections and bloating, as well as less obvious signs including cystitis, headaches, bad breath, tiredness, food allergies, increased sensitivity to chemicals and even depression.

Although low moods are often thought of as problems in the brain, research now suggests they may stem from digestive issues*. An



HAPPIER on the inside

When it comes to feeling upbeat, it's not just your moods that count, it's what's going on in your intestines too. In the third of our gut health series we explore the link between yeast overgrowth and happiness.

overgrowth of yeasts such as candida is believed to suppress the production of key neurotransmitters, such as the mood-regulator serotonin, thereby reducing your ability to feel upbeat. And, as 95 per cent of your body's serotonin is made in your digestive tract, having your gut working effectively makes sense if you want to improve your mental health too. Scientists at New Delhi's Department of Microbiology go so far as to say that 'psychiatric disorders require not only antipsychotic treatment but also antifungal measures to treat the organic cause behind such illness.'

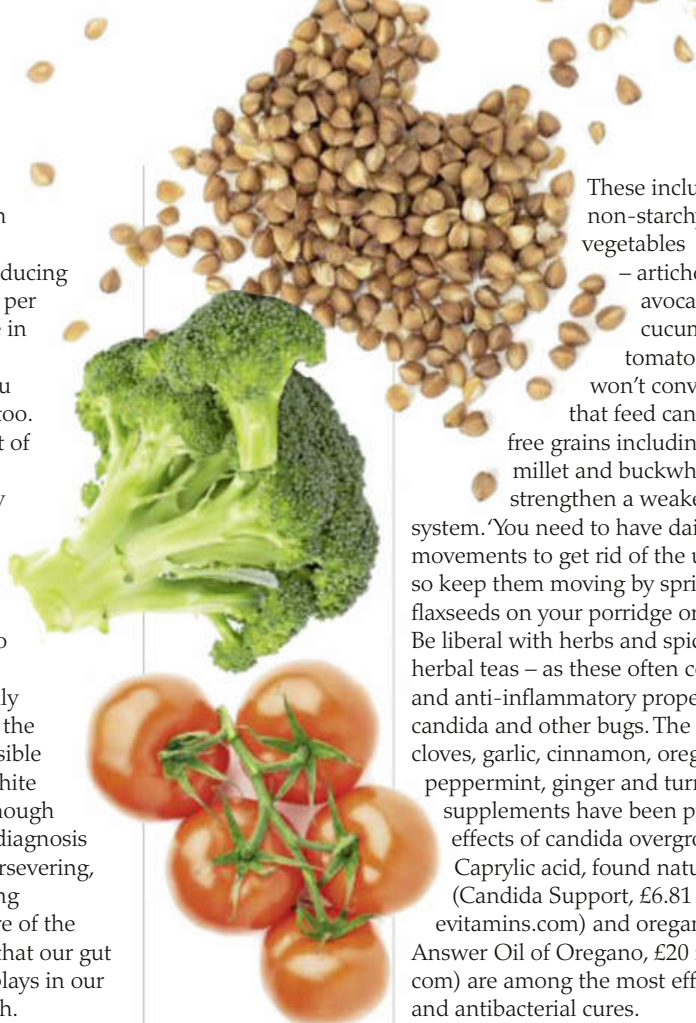
Candidiasis is still a poorly understood condition and difficult to diagnose, as symptoms can be vague. There are also no medically recognised tests, apart from in the case of thrush where very visible symptoms such as thick white discharge are present. Though it can be hard to get a diagnosis initially, it's worth persevering, as GPs are becoming increasingly aware of the important role that our gut microbiome plays in our overall health.

Some GPs, such as Dr Rangan Chatterjee of Old Hall Clinic, Gatley, Cheshire, offer patients a stool analysis to see whether candida is causing gut problems. 'I check whether there is an imbalance in the gut causing bugs, including candida, to grow out of control,' says Dr Chatterjee, who is also a member of the Institute of Functional Medicine. 'Then, I'll see why these normally harmless organisms have suddenly become problematic.'

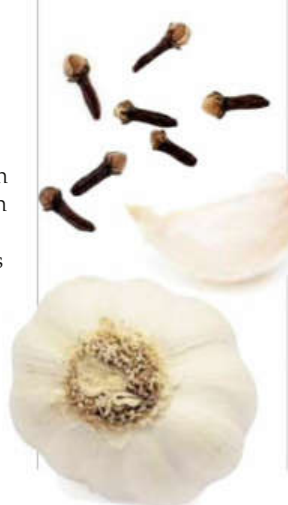
EAT TO BEAT CANDIDA

If you think you have the signs of a candida overgrowth, some simple changes to your diet can help get your gut flora back to optimum health. 'The most important thing is to stop feeding the yeast,' says nutritional therapist Andrea Everingham. 'Firstly, cut out sugar, which feeds candida.' This means eliminating food with refined sugar, plus fruit, milk (as lactose is a sugar), as well as yeast-containing foods such as bread and alcohol, and potentially mould-containing ones such as olives and peanuts. You should follow this diet until symptoms subside, then you can gradually begin reintroducing a few foods at a time, such as low-sugar fruits such as berries.

Until then, aim to eat candida-beating foods.



Bring your
gut flora
back to
optimum
health
with
candida-
fighting
foods.



These include non-starchy vegetables

– artichoke, avocado, broccoli, cucumber, onions and tomatoes – because they won't convert to the sugars that feed candida. Opt for gluten-free grains including amaranth, quinoa, millet and buckwheat, which can help strengthen a weakened digestive

system. 'You need to have daily bowel movements to get rid of the unwanted microbes, so keep them moving by sprinkling chia seeds or flaxseeds on your porridge or salad,' says Andrea. Be liberal with herbs and spices – including herbal teas – as these often contain antifungal and anti-inflammatory properties, which can kill candida and other bugs. The best ones are basil, cloves, garlic, cinnamon, oregano, liquorice, peppermint, ginger and turmeric. Antifungal supplements have been proven to reduce the effects of candida overgrowth on the body.

Caprylic acid, found naturally in coconut oil (Candida Support, £6.81 for 90 capsules, evitamins.com) and oregano oil (Nature's Answer Oil of Oregano, £20 for 30ml, auravita.com) are among the most effective antifungal and antibacterial cures.

PROBIOTIC PROTECTION

Adding probiotics to your diet is another way to curb candidiasis too. Fermented foods such as kefir, sauerkraut and unsweetened natural yoghurt naturally contain probiotics and increase the good bacteria in your gut to keep candida at bay. If you don't like the taste of fermented foods, opt for a supplement that directly targets candida yeast, such as Bio-Kult Candéa, £14.95 for 60 capsules, from bio-kult.com.

Once you've conquered the candida in your gut, you'll soon start to notice improvements in the way you feel. Chances are you won't just have cured candida overgrowth and its symptoms, but you may just find you've a whole new lease of life, with your mental and physical health back on top form.

ANTIBIOTICS KILL YOUR GOOD BACTERIA

While antibiotics kill invading bugs, they also upset the natural balance of your gut flora, allowing candida and other yeasts to take over and breed like mad. If you're taking antibiotics, take a high-strength probiotic too. Find out more about antibiotics on page 22.

● Next month: Exploring the connection between autoimmune disease and gut health.

My Greek Style Yogurt

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FACTFILE

Protect your pancreas

How much do you know about the gland that controls your insulin and digestion? Here's why it's important to keep it healthy.

YOUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM works hard to process all the stuff that passes through it, converting food to energy and sending nutrients to the right places without you even having to think about it. And while your intestines get a lot of press, there's a diligent glandular organ in your digestive system that probably isn't getting the praise it deserves. At just 15cm long, your pancreas plays a massive part in digestion, controlling how the nutrients you eat are absorbed.

Pancreatic juices contain enzymes that are passed through a series of ducts into the first part of your small intestine. It is here that this liquid begins to break down food and distribute vitamins, carbohydrates, proteins and fats.

Your pancreas also has a vital role in your endocrine system – the collection of glands that sends hormones around your body. The pancreas produces insulin, which helps to regulate your blood glucose levels and keep your energy and metabolism working properly.

PANCREAS WELLBEING

To help your pancreas stay healthy, doctors recommend a diet containing around 30-50g of healthy fat per day, opting for low-fat meat and dairy such as chicken and cottage cheese. This will slow enzyme production and help

prevent your pancreas becoming overloaded and inflamed. Include up to three tablespoons of coconut or palm kernel oil per day in your diet. These nutritional fats, called medium chain fatty acids, don't need enzymes from the pancreas to break them down.

Alcohol and dehydration causes inflammation in the pancreas,

so try to drink up to two litres of water a day – although this can come from food and other drinks such as tea. Also bear in mind the government's lower risk guidelines of no more than 2-3 units of alcohol a day, which is a large gin and tonic or large glass of wine.

The most common pancreas health problem is pancreatitis, affecting around 10,000 people a year in the UK. This inflammatory condition is usually caused by excessive alcohol over time, although there are also links to Crohn's and ulcerative colitis, which are also inflammatory conditions of the digestive system. Symptoms

include upper abdominal pain and vomiting, although it's initially treatable by following the dietary changes mentioned earlier.

The second most common pancreas disorder is cancer, which can be caused by pancreatitis, but is mostly linked to age. Symptoms can be pain in your back or stomach, yellowing of the skin and eyes, and unexpected weight loss. Half of all new cases of pancreatic cancer occur in people aged 75 and over, although some lifestyle factors increase the risk too. 'Smoking is linked to 29 per cent of cases in the UK, and

obesity to 12 per cent,' says Anna Jewell of Pancreatic Cancer UK.

A new early-stage urine test for pancreatic cancer is in development, which identifies three proteins associated with the disease with more than 90 per cent accuracy.

It's hoped that ongoing new research such as this will help improve detection and, as a result, improve pancreatic cancer survival rates for hundreds of people.



GET INVOLVED

November is Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month. To help raise money, visit pancreaticcancer.org.uk/hostforhope. For advice, treatment options and support, call 0808 801 0707.



The pancreas (above, orange) is in the upper abdomen.

Nature's nurses

As the season turns colder, keep your immune system strong with the remedies Mother Nature provides.

WHEN YOU FEEL FIT and full of energy, you can pretty much take on anything life throws at you. But at this time of year you're 80 per cent more likely to catch a cold than at any other time*. The change of seasons brings with it a decrease in temperature, leading to a tendency for you to be less active and spend more time indoors in close proximity to others, making you more likely to catch germs.

If you do fall foul of a bug, you might be tempted to go to your medicine cabinet or nearest pharmacist in the hope of finding a cure. You might even end up popping to the doctors for a course of antibiotics. However, with more and more bacteria becoming resistant to man-made antibiotics, perhaps it's time we turned back to nature for effective healing remedies.

Coconut oil is a highly potent disease-fighter.



THE NEWS ON ANTIBIOTICS

The discovery of antibiotics in the 1940s changed the face of medicine, curing illnesses such as pneumonia and minor wound infections that would have otherwise been fatal. Fast-forward 70 years, and their potency has greatly diminished. This is mainly due to the fact they have been used for common illnesses that our body's immune systems are naturally designed to fight off, such as a simple respiratory or ear infection. According to Dr Robert Cunney, consultant microbiologist at the Health Protection Surveillance Centre in Ireland, up to 75 per cent of antibiotic use could potentially be avoided*. 'There's a certain complacency about antibiotics. They're seen as the drug of convenience,' he says.

In August, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) highlighted the fact

that many patients go to their GPs demanding antibiotics, which it said leads 'soft touch' doctors to prescribe one in four (around 10 million) unnecessary prescriptions for antibiotics each year. Short term, they may rid you of a sore throat, but in the long term, they could be contributing to the next one.

When bacteria in your body are continuously exposed to antibiotics, they start to become resistant. They do this by firstly identifying the antibiotic compounds, then changing their membranes to confuse the antibiotics so they

can't get into the bacteria, or by binding to the target germ so the antibiotic can't recognise it. This then allows the bacteria to multiply at a rapid rate and pass on their antibiotic-resistant properties to the new microbes they create. So, it's a vicious cycle – the more antibiotics you take, the less effective they become.

Over the past few decades, strains of bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* have started to

become resistant to antibiotics, which medical experts are classing as one of the top three threats to human health. Figures published in 2014 show that 50,000 people die every year from antibiotic-resistant infections in the USA and Europe*. *S. aureus* is now resistant to Methicillin, hence why it is now known as the 'superbug' MRSA – Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. *E. coli* has become Vancomycin-resistant, and *K. pneumoniae* and *M. tuberculosis* are now multi-drug resistant. For the first time since the invention of antibiotics, the pace at which antibiotic resistance is growing is overtaking the pace at which new drugs are being developed. Now the race is on for scientists to find new species of antibiotics that work against these resistant strains of bacteria.



Wild garlic has traditionally been used to prevent infection and treat colds.



NATURAL CURES

Many of the most widely used antibiotics have come directly from nature. Penicillin, for example, is derived from a fungus in soil. Mother Nature has been looking after plants, animals and humans for millions of years, so it's no surprise that science is now turning its attention away from chemicals and going back to its roots to cure the body of disease. Recent research has unveiled a promising new antibiotic in soil from a previously uncultured genus, which kills drug-resistant bacteria*. Teixobactin, which comes from tapping into soil microorganisms using an electronic chip and then harvesting their antibacterial compounds, successfully killed both *S. aureus* and *Streptococcus pneumoniae* in studies. It's been hailed as a game changer.

Nests of leafcutter ants have also proved to be an exciting resource*. These ants cultivate antibiotic-producing bacteria on their bodies. Scientists at the John Innes Centre in Norfolk are studying them closely in the hope they will tap into the natural processes that lead to discovering new antibiotics.

One of the newest natural alternatives that is already on the market is olive leaf extract. It boosts the numbers of friendly bacteria in your gut, so that your natural defences are stronger. It also has the capability to kill bacteria and cut off the supply of amino acids to viruses too, preventing them from growing. Some studies have shown that strains of bacteria such as *E. coli*, *S. aureus* and *K. pneumonia* can be completely destroyed within three hours of exposure to a 0.6 per cent concentration of olive leaf extract*.

You've probably heard about the benefits of coconut oil as a beauty boon, but it's also loaded with fats called medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) that contain immune-boosting and bacteria-killing fatty acids such as lauric acid and caprylic acid. Studies have found that MCTs can fight a strain of antibiotic-resistant bacteria called *Clostridium difficile**, which is rife in hospitals and causes stomach upsets.

By tapping in to some of the rich resources Mother Nature provides, you can bring your body back into balance if you do catch a cold or bug, without resorting to a prescription. And the best thing is that you don't need to keep these resources just for when you're feeling ill. It's near impossible to overdose on supplements and nutrients – so use them to keep you well, as well as to help you feel better when you do get poorly. What better reason to go back to nature!

Thyme can offer calming effects for skin and mind

NATURE'S MEDICINE CABINET

While research on more natural medical treatments is ongoing, there are plenty of tried-and-trusted remedies you can use to boost your health.



GARLIC has a natural antibiotic effect and was used by Russian soldiers during World War II when they ran out of penicillin. Grinding a few cloves of garlic into a cup of boiled water when you feel the onset of a cold or sore throat is an effective first line defence. Grinding the garlic cloves is important, as this helps release a powerful compound called allicin that attacks viruses and bacteria and will help fight infection. Allicin is also proving to be highly effective at fighting superbugs such as MRSA.



GINGER has antibacterial and antibiotic potency and is especially useful when grated into tea, with honey, to treat sore throats, colds and stomach upsets. Recent studies have found that ginger and honey extracts can be more effective than antibiotics like amoxicillin and penicillin for fighting bacterial infections such as MRSA and E. coli. Honey and ginger have been used since ancient times for their medicinal and healing properties, but science is just discovering the extent of their antibacterial potency. Taken together, they act as a powerhouse inhibiting the growth of bacteria*.



ANDROGRAPHIS PANICULATA is a traditional Indian herb that has been used for centuries to treat diseases and fight infection. Known as the king of bitters, it has strong antibacterial properties that are potent against most pathogens – particularly for chest infections and the flu. £7.25, bigvits.co.uk.

A few drops of oregano oil can soothe a sore throat or cold



PAU D'ARCO BARK from South America has been used by natural healers to treat fever and inflammation since 1873. It contains the compounds lapachol and beta-lapachone, which contain antiviral and antibacterial properties and can eliminate infections that many antibiotics can't. £10.99, revival.co.uk.



ESSENTIAL OILS such as thyme, oregano, patchouli, tea tree, geranium, lavender and grapefruit have the potential to be antibacterial agents in treating and eliminating superbugs, according to growing evidence*. In particular, oregano oil is being hailed as a miracle cure*. Its strong antibacterial and antifungal properties, in the

form of compounds known as thymol and carvacrol, fight almost every infection and inflammation to which antibiotics have become resistant. Buy oregano essential oil to use externally for skin complaints, £6.99, hollandandbarrett.com, or take a daily supplement with food, such as Swanson Oregano Oil, £4.99, healthmonthly.co.uk.

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THERAPIST'S TOOLBOX

DISCOVER SELF-HYPNOSIS

Therapist Jenny Gould explains how to create lasting positive life changes by entering an imaginary world in your mind for a few minutes each day.

WITH THE SEASONS changing and leaves falling from the trees, you too can affect change inside yourself by letting go of unwanted, negative beliefs and planting new, positive ones to transform your life in small or much larger ways.

You may not realise it but you are constantly creating your internal landscape – your own version of reality – with what you think about and imagine all day long. It can be all too easy fall into the habit of replaying negative ‘background videos’ i.e.

thoughts or images that affect the way you perceive the world around you.

One of the simplest and yet most powerful methods for releasing these thoughts is self-hypnosis, which can help you improve your mood, shift your perspective, stay focused on the positives and feel happier.

Hypnosis is one of the oldest of all therapeutic techniques and can help people overcome psychological, emotional and even physical problems. In case you were wondering, it's not the same as stage hypnosis. Self-hypnosis isn't mind control, brain washing or in any way mystical – it's a naturally occurring state.

If you sometimes find yourself daydreaming or so absorbed in a task that you don't notice what's going on around you, that's a similar feeling to self-hypnosis – one of deep absorption and internal focus. Read on to try it yourself.



TRY IT YOURSELF

Use self-hypnosis to release fearful and unhelpful thoughts, and replace them with something more empowering.

1 Sit somewhere where you won't be disturbed.

2 Fix your gaze on a spot ahead of you and notice the details, such as colour, texture etc.

3 Defocus your eyes, so your vision blurs slightly and your lids become heavy.

4 Focus on your breathing, taking slow, deep breaths and relaxing your shoulders with each out breath, so you feel limp.

5 Visualise walking down some steps, counting from 10 to one, relaxing deeper with each number.

6 Imagine you've now reached a special place, somewhere wonderfully relaxing that's either real

– perhaps a favourite holiday spot – or from your imagination. It could be a beautiful garden, a boat on a lake or a tropical beach. Be as creative as you like. Really immerse yourself in the details. Scan each of your senses to see what's around you. The smell of flowers? The sound of the ocean?

7 Now you're relaxed, you can programme your new reality. Do you want to be healthier, or more assertive? Imagine yourself having made the changes you want to make. What do

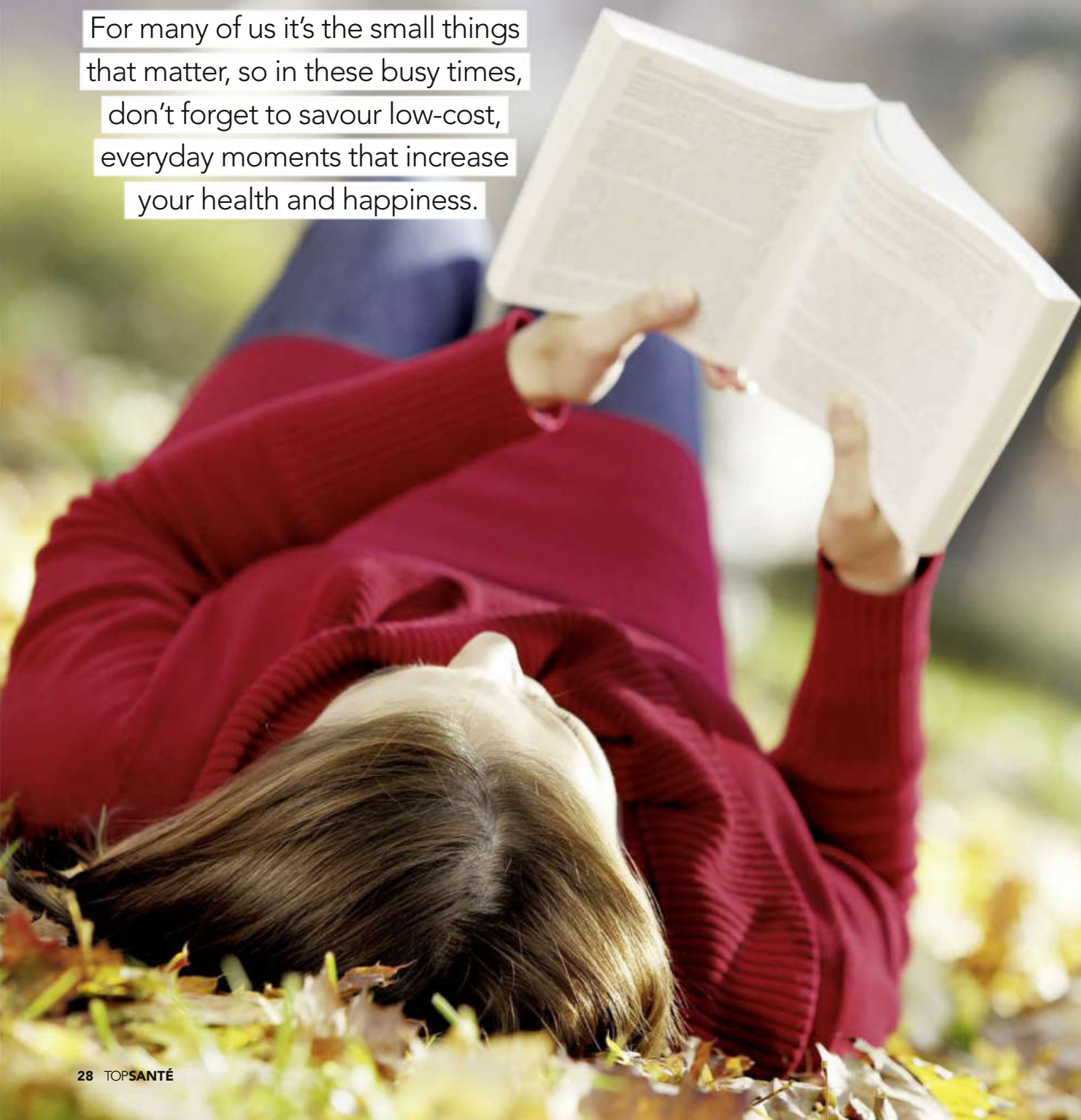
you look like? Who is around you? Really connect with how you feel inside.

8 When you're ready, allow the images to fade, walk back up the steps and, when you reach the top, slowly open your eyes and go on with your day. If you find it hard to visualise, just keep practising and strengthening your mental muscles. Do this exercise for 10 minutes every day. You'll soon notice positive changes as your new beliefs ingrain themselves into your subconscious.



25 SOUL SOOTHERS

For many of us it's the small things that matter, so in these busy times, don't forget to savour low-cost, everyday moments that increase your health and happiness.



1 Lose yourself in a book

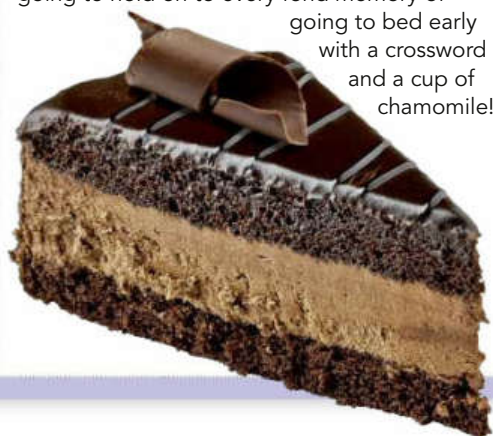
'Books are the quietest and most constant of friends... and the most accessible and wisest of counsellors,' American author Charles W Eliot once said. When we read fiction we can submerge ourselves in the characters, adventures and tribulations within the pages, leaving our own anxieties behind us. In fact, a study by the University of Sussex showed that those who read for just six minutes said their anxiety levels had dropped by 70 per cent! A good reason to be a bookworm for a while.

2 Give thanks

We say 'thank you' around 5,000 times a year, but how many times is it just uttered in passing? A sincere gesture of thanks automatically negates any other feelings of annoyance or frustration we may have. So, next time someone does something thoughtful for you, look them in the eye and say 'thank you'. Or, go one step further and write a note. Researchers found that people who wrote letters of gratitude experienced increased happiness*.

4 Indulge yourself

Next time you eat a big piece of chocolate cake, open a bottle of red or buy a special piece of jewellery, make sure you really savour the moment. 'Pleasure is a signal that your body has what it needs,' says Stefan Klein, author of *The Science of Happiness* (Marlowe & Co). As these indulgent moments don't often happen every day, it's important to enjoy them guilt-free. Think about it this way – you're not going to hold on to every fond memory of going to bed early with a crossword and a cup of chamomile!



3 Just dance

Dancing is like a massage for the soul. It provides a physical and emotional release – so much so that researchers from the University of London found that anxiety sufferers who had a dancing session felt less anxious than those who'd been tasked with an exercise or maths class.



5 Dine in

If it's cold outside, embrace a cosy night in and invite friends or family over. A US study* showed that bonding with loved ones over a meal is 78 per cent more effective at improving happiness levels than seeing a traditional talk-based therapist. In being together we discover how good it is to enjoy the company of others and get a nice meal!

6 Bring the outdoors in

While nature is hibernating outside, having plants on your windowsill can bring life to the colder months. They don't just look pretty – a study by the University of Melbourne found that looking at plants or flowers for just 40 seconds boosts your attention span. Right now, poinsettias are in season. These bold-leaved plants are bound to brighten up your home and mind.



7 Get your bake on

The scent of freshly baked bread or cinnamon buns infusing your home makes it feel warm and inviting. With Stir-up Sunday taking place four weeks before Christmas, why not get baking with the family? On this day where everyone takes a turn in stirring the bowl, try this healthy seasonal cake recipe: mix up 500g mixed dried fruit, 1 tsp cinnamon, ½ tsp nutmeg, zest and juice from one orange, 2 tbsp olive oil, 3 eggs, 200g ground walnuts, then pour into a lined 20cm cake tin and bake for 1 1/2 hours at 150°C/gas 2.



8 Write loving words

'The art of letter writing is like the art of providing comforting arms,' says French philosopher Denis Diderot. That's especially true now, when we often opt for texts or emails rather than a written note. Next time you're rushing out, take a moment to scribble a few words for your loved one – a romantic saying or fond memory – then leave the house with the warm feeling of knowing you'll bring a smile to their face when they see it.

10 Seize the excitement

We sometimes get so caught up in our daily tasks that we forget to anticipate future exciting moments. When the thought of an upcoming meal out, weekend away or meeting with a friend pops into your mind, hold it there for a moment. This will activate the release of dopamine, instigating feelings of excitement and positivity.

9 Hold hands

A gentle embrace, a soft touch on the arm, a hand held tenderly – these simple gestures makes an affirmation that you're connected to someone dear. When we feel another person's touch on our skin, our breathing and muscles relax, and stress hormones reduce. So next time you're out shopping or watching TV with your partner, remember to reach out for their hand.





11 Take a wander

Our days are often spent rushing from one place to the next, so take a moment to slow the pace and walk more mindfully. Setting aside 20 minutes to go for a stroll, breathing in the fresh air around you, reduces your stress levels. This is because the brain's 'fight or flight' response is calmed by the neurotransmitters that are released when you get up and walk about.

12 Savour warmth

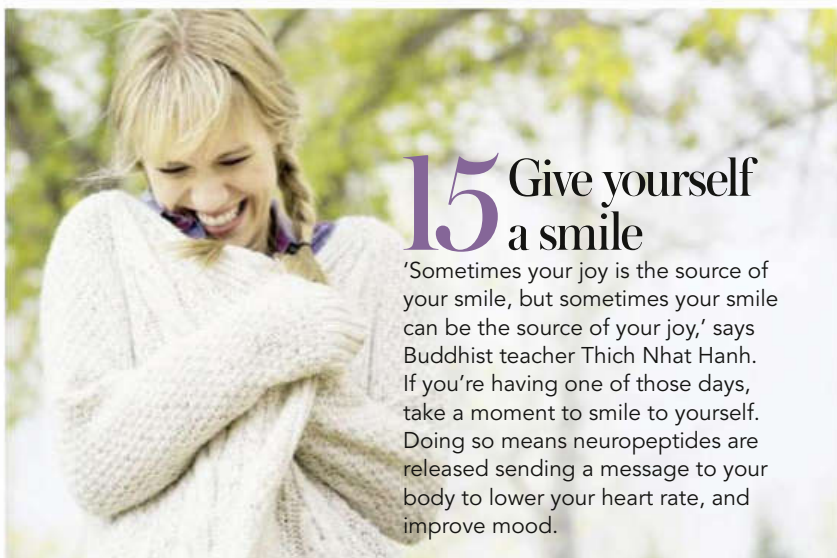
It seems obvious that we naturally seek out warmth during the colder months, but scientists at London Metropolitan University have shown that it doesn't just please our bodies – feeling warm also implies closeness. In the study, some volunteers were given a mug of hot drink to hold and some a cold cup, while they evaluated personalities of fictional characters. The warmer volunteers gave much more generous, trusting evaluations.

14 Relish tastes

Eating mindfully, savouring the warm sensation of a bowl of soup or the tantalising scent of a freshly cooked roast, is a skill that not many of us use. The benefits, however, include better emotional control and more appreciation of an everyday act that's often taken for granted. Next time you sit down to eat, use all your senses to enjoy the food, noting how relaxed and grateful you feel when you truly appreciate the different sensations.

13 Light a candle

On a dark November night, the soft light of a candle creates a little halo of security in our homes, helping us feel more relaxed and settled. A survey by The National Candle Association revealed that nine out of ten people purchase a candle to make themselves feel more comfortable and cosy.



15 Give yourself a smile

'Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy,' says Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh. If you're having one of those days, take a moment to smile to yourself. Doing so means neuropeptides are released sending a message to your body to lower your heart rate, and improve mood.

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³Experience based survey of 93 pharmacy professionals, August 2015.

16 Open your ears and mind

How often do you really listen when someone's talking? Next time someone starts a conversation, stop anything else you're doing and turn to face them. You'll be surprised at how much more you hear and interpret in their mannerisms, tone of voice and eye contact. When you truly listen, you gain stronger emotional connections.

17 Enjoy doing nothing

When you've got no chores to do and can enjoy a bit of breathing space, take a moment to sit still, close your eyes and clear your mind for a few minutes. Better still, make a habit of devoting an hour to simply being in the present moment, practising 'aimlessness'. Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh describes this as, 'knowing you have everything you need to stop and make the present moment the happiest in your life'.

18 Keep on sleeping

After intensive studies on sleep, psychologist Norbert Schwarz declared that getting an extra hour a night has a more positive effect on daily happiness levels than getting a £35k pay rise. The thought of sleeping in an hour later on dark mornings is enough to bring a smile to anyone's face!

20 Give yourself a boost

On average, we look in the mirror 16 times a day. While it's easy to wallow in the negative – maybe you think you look tired or don't like a particular feature – give your confidence a boost instead. The next time you face your reflection, pause, and give praise. 'Self-belief is not something that just happens – it takes work,' says Sophie Uliano, author of *Gorgeous For Good* (Hay House). Each time you look in the mirror, look yourself in the eye for five seconds and say to yourself, 'you are beautiful and unique'.



19 Move to music

When you switch on your radio and hear a cheesy classic from your youth, you can't help but sing along. But while this nostalgia makes you feel good, there are also health benefits. When music with a familiar tempo comes on, your heart rate becomes steadier, your blood pressure decreases and your breathing regulates. So next time you hear Wham! on the radio for what seems like the millionth time, turn up the volume!

21 Give a little gift

Presents don't always need an occasion. A small gesture, such as sending a friend a trinket you know they'll love, will give them a boost by knowing someone's thinking of them. The act of giving will also trigger the circular reward centre in your brain, meaning you feel good too.



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22 Laugh a lot

As soon as you start to laugh, you are naturally in the present moment. As a result, your muscles relax, and you inhale more quickly, which boosts your cells with more oxygen. So whether it's a funny advert on TV, or a joke between your friends, let the chuckles commence and work their magic.

23 Snuggle up indoors

Make the most of autumn and winter by spending more time inside, nurturing your health and your soul. Being in the comfort of your own home creates a sense of security, which is a main factor in wellbeing. It helps you relax more easily, your levels of the stress hormone cortisol reduce and your blood pressure remains stable. So stick on a film and cuddle up, wrapped in your favourite throw.



24 Do a doodle

Have you ever idly scribbled on a bit of paper while you're waiting for something or talking on the phone? This act of doodling is actually helping your brain to problem-solve events from your day, as the neural pathways between motor actions and thought are subconsciously strengthened. If you want to boost relationships, doodle hearts, whereas for confidence, scribble some flowers.

25 Get all nostalgic

Take a moment to think about some happy occasions from times gone by. When you recall happy moments from the past, your brain triggers the release of recollected emotions from your hippocampus. Those happy feelings wash over you once again and, in turn, give you hope for the future.

Love your hair again

Hair styling, colour treatments, poor diet and hormonal changes can all have an impact on our hair.

Hairfollic® is based on the latest nutritional research to provide biotin, selenium and zinc which help to maintain normal hair, plus specific amino acids and Marine Collagen.



Hairfollic® contains Tricologic™ – an exclusive Biomarine complex with Grape Seed and Collagen extracts.



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VITABIOTICS
SCIENCE OF HEALTHY LIVING



The wonder of SELF-RENEWAL

Your amazing body constantly repairs itself against wear and tear to keep you alive and well. We focus on the marvels of self-restoration and what you can do to help your body along.

YOUR AMAZING BODY goes through lots of stages during your lifetime. No matter what your chronological age, each organ, muscle and

blood vessel is constantly renewing and repairing itself. Did you know that your liver is only five months old? And your stomach lining renews itself completely every five days? It's all thanks to your body's amazing ability to regenerate. The annual output of cells in your body is enough to form 18 livers, six bladders, 16 lungs and 200 intestines. And it's this act of constant rejuvenation going on inside your body that keeps you healthy.

Day to day, your body will encounter a variety of things to disrupt its balance – environmental toxins, bad diet choices or physical and emotional stress. But nevertheless, it keeps on going. This is due to a highly complex cycle of cell death, called apoptosis, and regeneration. Up to 40 million cells die every second, which sounds a lot, but is nothing compared to the fact that your body is made of up to 37 trillion cells, with millions of new ones being made every second too.

STRENGTHEN YOUR HEART'S VALVES

Your heart pumps up to 100ml of blood around your body approximately 70 times per minute – around 10,000 litres a day*. Despite this enormous expenditure of energy, half of the muscle cells in your heart are replaced over your lifetime. And in addition to this, doctors have discovered a nifty adaptation the heart makes over time. If a large artery starts to get smaller or blocked due to age, or lifestyle-related plaque builds up, your heart creates a kind of emergency exit by increasing the pressure through smaller vessels and turning them into replacement arteries. You can help this process along by doing vigorous periods of exercise, such as sprints or a session of high-intensity interval training, which force blood flow to detour around blockages, using your smaller collateral arteries.

BALANCE YOUR HYPOTHALAMUS

At any one time, your body is sending a huge amount of data to the hypothalamus region of your brain – your hunger, thirst, pH and temperature levels, to name a few. Your hypothalamus then sends signals to

your nervous system to adjust any imbalances, repairing and recovering glucose levels and body temperature if it goes off balance. As your hormones change over the years, your hypothalamus function can be disrupted, which is what causes hot flushes during the menopause. However, you can keep your hypothalamus healthy by eating plenty of omega-3s from oily fish, avocados and olive oil, as these help to keep brain cells strong. Also include foods with vitamin B12 in your diet, as this helps protect brain nerve cells. Sources include milk, eggs, chicken and salmon.

BREATHE LIFE INTO YOUR LUNGS

Your lungs are in constant contact with the outside world. Each day, around 20,000 litres of air passes through them, taking with it all of the toxins and pollutants in your surroundings. Thankfully, the surface of your lungs is completely renewed after eight days, which keeps their function strong. It works via two different types of cells – type 1, which is in charge of gas exchanging, and type 2, which secretes the lubricating substance that keeps the

airways open. Scientists have found a remarkable teamwork between the two types of cells. In experiments where the lung faced damage that required advanced repair, such as after smoke inhalation, the type 1 cells were recruited to do the same job as the type 2 ones to speed up regeneration.

You can help strengthen your lungs by breathing fresh air during regular walks, runs or cycle rides, away from traffic. Also consider taking a glutathione supplement, which is directly absorbed by the lungs' cells and has antioxidant properties to fight toxins and free radicals. Try Swanson

“The surface of your lungs is completely renewed after eight days, keeping their function strong.”

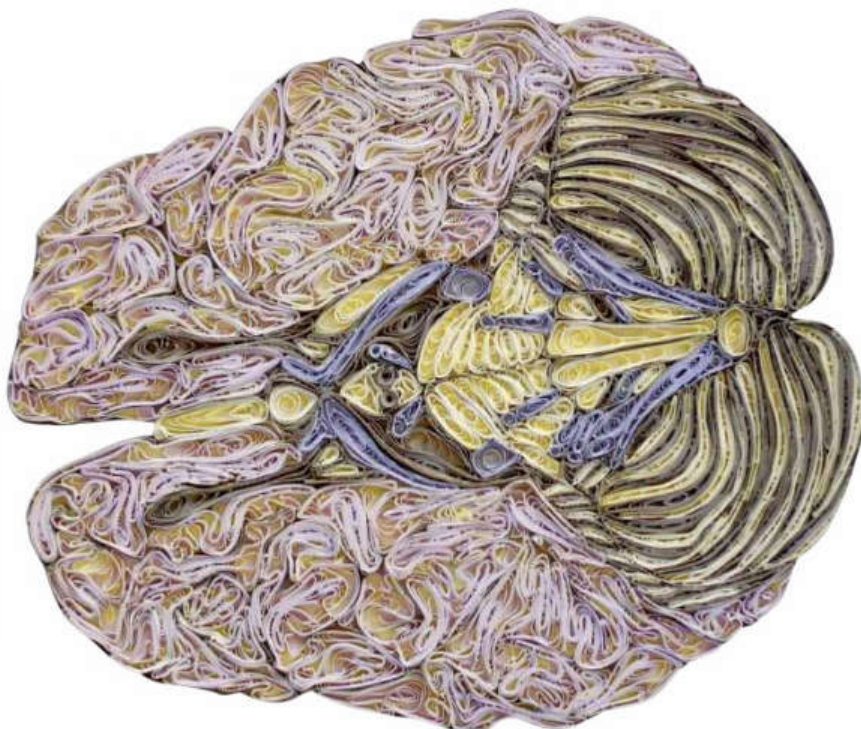
L-Glutathione, £9.48 for 100 capsules, healthmonthly.co.uk.

FILTER YOUR BRAIN

Your most important tool for regeneration is sleep. While you're sleeping, new nerve connections are made in your brain, which are essential for consolidating memories in your hippocampus. In addition, US scientists now believe that your brain has its own waste removal system to get rid of toxins when you sleep.

'Think of an aquarium. If it doesn't have a filter, the fish will die at some point. And as the brain constantly needs to get rid of rubbish in the form of neurotoxins, it needs a filter too,' says Dr Maiken Nedergaard, a sleep expert at the University of Rochester.

Dr Nedergaard proposes that this process, which your brain is too busy for when you're awake, can prevent the loss of brain cells caused by



a build-up of damaged proteins that could otherwise lead to conditions such as Alzheimer's or Parkinson's.

Everyone is different when it comes to the amount of sleep they need, but quality certainly has an advantage over quantity. To get restorative deep sleep where your brain has no other disruptions, ensure your room is dark, cool and doesn't have interferences from buzzing electrical items.

PROTECT YOUR BLOOD VESSELS

Your endothelial cells, which cover your blood and lymphatic vessels, weigh around 1.5kg. Laid out, they would cover six tennis courts. These cells form a thin protective layer that coats every blood vessel from the inside, forming a barrier between blood and tissue. When these cells start to wear out with age or through the plaque build-up associated with heart disease, gaps begin to form in the vessel wall, having detrimental effects on your blood's pressure and flow. While a good diet and regular exercise will keep your endothelial cells healthy, give them an extra boost by taking milk thistle, which contains a plant extract called silymarin that helps strengthen them against damage. Try Milk Thistle 80% Silymarin, £13.99 for 50 capsules, nutricentre.com.

BUILD MORE MUSCLE

Your muscle cells divide more frequently under stress, which is how weight training works – tearing then repairing to strengthen the tissues. However, all this hard work actually goes on when

you're resting after your workout. When you rest or sleep, muscles release a growth hormone to make them thicker and more powerful where the cells have divided, essentially filling in the gaps with new cells. If you don't use your muscles, however, the opposite happens, leading to what's called sarcopenia, or muscle wastage. After the age of 30, you lose five per cent of your muscle mass every 10 years, and, by the age of 80, the loss can be 25 per cent. To keep your cells regenerating, do three half-hour sessions each week using resistance bands or hand weights.

HEAL YOUR BONES

Throughout your life, your body continuously removes old bone tissue and replaces it with fresh. Cells called osteoclasts, which absorb bone tissue, work in tandem with osteoblasts, which secrete the substance to make new bones, in a process called remodelling. Up until the age of 40, all the bone removed is replaced around every six months, but after the age of 40 this process slows down, which is why it's harder to recover if you get a fracture.

You can help your bones to keep remodelling by ensuring you get adequate exercise and nutrients. Aim for 1,000mg calcium (you can get 205mg from 100g kale, or 340mg from a tin of sardines) and 1,000 IU vitamin D (around half an hour of winter sun) daily. Also, do weight-bearing exercise such as jogging, hiking or weight training three or more times a week.




These beautiful quilling illustrations were made by artist Sarah Yakawonis. Find out more at yakawonis.com.



Simply SLEEP WELL

It's easy to wake up feeling refreshed. Discover how restorative your sleep can be when you get quality slumber, particularly now the clocks are going back.



SINKING INTO A SOFT pillow, your eyelids getting heavier, your thoughts from the day melting away – there's no better feeling than falling into a deep sleep. Sometimes though, for all manner of reasons, your sleep patterns can be disturbed. When this happens, it helps if you can get back in touch with your body's natural rhythm.

We all have an internal circadian clock, which establishes whether we're early or late risers. If you're the latter, you will fall back into your natural pattern at the weekend by sleeping in. But weekends can wreak havoc for the early risers among us, who may go to bed later after socialising with friends, but still wake up with the larks. Experts refer to this phenomenon as 'social jetlag'. The bigger the difference between your biological clock and a weekday's sleep requirement, the greater the social jetlag. The effect is similar to that of a long-haul flight, hence the name, but when it repeatedly occurs, it can lead to chronic sleep deprivation. This causes your body to experience a continual, unhealthy level of stress and raised cortisol levels, which can leave you more susceptible to physical illness, including heart problems, diabetes and depression.

Another thing to be mindful of is the time you wake up, as this can have the biggest impact on tiredness. 'Instead of concentrating on difficulties falling or staying asleep, take note of your biorhythm, which is your daily cycle of sleeping and waking,' says chronobiologist Dr Achim Kramer. 'Your daily routine is controlled by external factors such as the working day, which often dictates when you have to get up, making it harder to live by your natural biorhythm.'

To get back into an ideal slumber pattern, follow our seven-step plan.

1 GET YOUR RECOMMENDED DOSE OF DAYLIGHT

Daylight is hugely important for your biological clock. From the age of 40, your biological clock begins to change and your sleep patterns are altered. The 'deep sleep' phase is reduced and sleeping becomes increasingly unstable. However, with the help of natural light, you can affect and even counteract these changes (for details, see our feature on page 12). Your body needs light to set its internal clock correctly.

Why not try walking to work or having a stroll at lunchtime? Research shows people who do this sleep better than those, of a similar age, who spend their day inactive and indoors.

2 GO WITH THE SEASONS

As soon as daylight falls on your retina, even when your eyelids are closed, the sleep hormone melatonin is reduced. When the clocks change, your biological clock gets out of sync slightly and it takes around seven days for it to readjust. Prepare for this by getting up 10 minutes later each day for a week before the clocks go back so the change doesn't affect you.

3 ADOPT A HEALTHY NUTRITION PLAN

Eating too much too fast or too close to bedtime can interfere with digestion and lead to a poor night's kip. Nutritionists recommend not eating anything after 7pm, because during the evening and overnight your digestive system is meant to just tick over while your body restores. Your digestive system and liver need to be active to breakdown food, so forcing them to work is likely to keep you awake, as digestion takes energy and the process can be uncomfortable when lying down.

4 TRY TO RELAX

Sometimes when you lie in bed your head can be racing with thoughts circulating over and over – making lists in your head of what needs doing tomorrow or going over what's happened that day. As a result, you can't switch off and sleep. Being in this heightened state of mental arousal can release the cortisol hormone and trigger your parasympathetic nervous system, which controls your fight or flight response. To combat restlessness, try writing in a diary before going to sleep. Include any worries and tasks for the next day so they'll be off your mind.

5 BLOCK OUT THE MOONLIGHT

When the light of a full moon illuminates your bedroom, you might sleep less soundly. Swiss researchers from the Centre for Chronobiology discovered why this is. People taking part in their research had a reduced deep sleep phase, and their melatonin levels decreased when sleeping in a room filled with moonlight. Bright street lights, or other sources of light,

can cause the same disturbance, so make sure you invest in a good blackout curtain to keep the light out.

6 KNOW YOUR WINDOW FOR FALLING ASLEEP

Everyone has an ideal point at which they fall asleep. For most of us, this is somewhere between 10 and 11.30pm. Your body sends signals to your hypothalamus that you need to rest. The signs are yawning, drooping eyelids and heavy limbs. They have a very definite message to convey... go to bed, preferably in the next 20 minutes!

7 WAKE UP REFRESHED

Once asleep, you pass through a number of different phases. 'These phases, on average, last around 90 minutes,' says Dr Kramer. 'Some people may experience only 80 minutes and others 100 minutes – these are repeated 4-6 times per night. The ideal time to get up is at the end of one of these cycles, when you enter a lighter sleeping phase – after approximately six, seven and a half, or nine hours. Your biological clock is set to wake up more easily at these intervals.'

If the alarm rings too early, and you find yourself still in a deep sleep or dream, it causes you to feel exhausted. One way to combat this is to invest in a dawn simulation clock, which emits light that gradually gets brighter on the build-up to the alarm, so by the time it goes off, your body has left its deep sleep phase.


WHERE MEMORIES ARE MADE

Approximately 30 minutes after you fall asleep, you go into the first phase of deep sleep, which lasts 20 minutes and is the longest and most refreshing. This repairs your cells so that your body can recover from the strains of the day.

In this phase, your body experiences a general overhaul. Simultaneously, an important part of the formation of memories occurs. During deep sleep your brain is working at full capacity – in particular the hippocampus, an area that decides whether something should be remembered

or forgotten. Newly learnt items are stored before being sent to the cerebral cortex for integration in the long-term memory.

Scientists at the University of London discovered that people in their 40s who slept for less than six hours per night, experienced accelerated decline in cognitive functions. This included perception, learning, memory and thinking abilities. The participants showed a definite decrease in their memory capability and vocabulary – they lacked concentration and their accident risk increased.



Deep sleep not only makes you smarter, it keeps you safe, too!

HOW RESTORATIVE IS YOUR SLEEP?

All questions are based on your sleep patterns over the past four weeks.

For each of the following questions, circle the most appropriate answer.

1. On average, how long did it take for you to fall asleep?

- Less than 15 minutes **0**
 16 to 30 minutes **1**
 31 to 60 minutes **2**
 Over 60 minutes **3**

2. How many hours per night have you actually slept? (This may not be the same as the number of hours that you have spent in bed).

- Over 7 hours **0**
 6 to 7 hours **1**
 5 to 6 hours **2**
 Less than 5 hours **3**

3. How often have you slept badly...

a) ...because you couldn't fall asleep within 30 minutes?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

b) ...because you woke up early in the morning or during the night?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

c) ...because you needed to get up to go to the toilet

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

d) ...because you had problems with your breathing?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

e) ...because you needed to cough or snored loudly?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

f) ...because you were too cold?

- Not at all **0**

- Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

g) ...because you were too warm?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

h) ...because you had a bad dream?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

i) ...because you were in pain?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

j) How often couldn't you sleep due to other reasons?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once per week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three or more times per week **3**

4. How would you describe the quality of your sleep overall?

- Very good **0**
 Fairly good **1**
 Fairly bad **2**
 Very bad **3**

5. How often have you taken sleeping tablets?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once **1**
 Once or twice **2**
 Three times or more **3**

6. How often have you had problems staying awake either when driving, eating or in the company of friends?

- Not at all **0**
 Less than once a week **1**
 Once or twice a week **2**
 Three times or more per week **3**

7. Have you had a problem finding enough energy to complete your necessary everyday tasks?

- No **0**
 Hardly any problem **1**
 Some problems **2**
 A huge problem **3**

EVALUATION

Calculate your result as explained below. The test is summarised in six headings.

1. The subjective sleep quality

The value of question 4

2. Sleep deficit

Add the values from questions 1 and 3a: 0 = 0 points, 1-2 = 1 point, 3-4 = 2 points and 5-6 = 3 points

3. Sleep duration

Value of question 2

4. Sleep disturbance

Add the values from questions 3b-3j: 0 = 0 points, 1-9 = 1 point, 10-18 = 2 points, 19-27 = 3 points

5. Consumption of sleeping aids

The value of question 5

6. Daily condition

Add the values from questions 6 and 7: 0 = 0 points, 1-2 = 1 point, 3-4 = 2 points, 5-6 = 3 points

TOTAL VALUE

(Add the values of the 6 headings)

LESS THAN 6 POINTS

You don't need to worry about the quality of your sleep. You awaken feeling fresh and rested, having had a healthy sleep.

BETWEEN 6 AND 10

You do not have a chronic sleeping problem but the quality of your night's sleep is poor. Occasional bad nights or temporary sleeping problems do not generally need to be treated. However, you can try to improve the quality of your sleep with the help of essential oils or plant-based preparations such as valerian.

MORE THAN 10

You could be experiencing a sleeping problem. This is the case when problems occur at least three or more times per week, and last for longer than four weeks. This has a noticeable effect on your mood and your daily efficiency. Ask your doctor for assistance in discovering the reason. In most cases this can be treated.



BRING A WORLD OF *contentment* YOUR WAY



Across the globe, different cultures use various occasions, customs, events and even food to help them feel happy. Take inspiration from them to bring joy to your part of the world.

SOUTH AFRICA

The distinctly African concept of ubuntu is the understanding that no human exists in isolation. It is often translated as, 'I am only a person through other people'. Ubuntu recognises that everything one does affects others, and that the welfare of each is dependent upon the welfare of all. This way of thinking makes moral responsibility, generosity and empathy intrinsic. Practising ubuntu in your own life may be as simple as cultivating empathy. Really listen to others, and put yourself in their shoes.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... Why not volunteer at a local charity, or help to organise a community event? It'll help you feel a sense of belonging in your own locale and help you see what others are going through, which is a great way to take your mind off your own troubles.

Germany

Friends, colleagues and like-minded strangers get together regularly at Stammtisches (tables reserved for regulars in bars or restaurants) to chat, laugh, spark connections and get a fresh perspective on the subjects that interest them. Groups have formed all over Germany, around every subject imaginable, from professions to politics, giving participants the chance to discuss their experiences and network.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS: If you've got a niche hobby, it's sometimes hard to find people to share it with.

Thankfully, in these ever-connected times, they can be just a click away. Search online for any clubs relating to your hobby, and you may spark up new friendships.

KOREA

The Obangsaek (traditional five colours) of red, black, yellow, white and green/blue correspond to the elements and our five basic tastes: bitter, salty, sweet, spicy and sour. By balancing these components in one dish and creating harmony in colour and taste, you promote health and happiness. The principle is illustrated well by the quintessential Korean meal bibimbap, in which equal

quantities of julienned ingredients such as carrot, dark pyogo mushroom, white bellflower root and green water parsley are laid concentrically around a yellow egg yolk on a bowl of rice. It's in the mixing before eating that the whole becomes greater than the parts.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... Consider the different parts of your life, including fitness, diet, wellbeing, health and relationships. If one seems out of balance with the others, think about how you can alter the mix to create better synergy.

Creating harmony on your plate is said to promote health and happiness in your life.



ITALY

Upsetting experiences are inevitable in life. Take a bad relationship break-up. It's traumatic at the best of times, but when your partner is cheating on you, it can be heartbreaking. In Rocca Canterano, near Rome, a festival is held in honour of those unfortunate enough to have had a love-rat partner. Actors parade through the main street, recounting satirical stories

of love's misadventures, betrayals and break-ups. It's a wry, unsentimental take on the foibles of the human heart.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... If you've born the brunt of heartbreak, throw a celebration with a twist, partying to commemorate a bad thing that's now passed. Gather together loyal friends, drink, laugh, cry and even rant if you need to. You'll feel relieved, and ready to look to the future.



CHILE

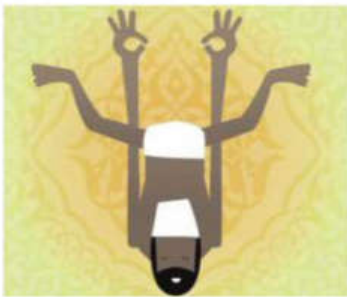
On the Chilean archipelago of Chiloé, the minga is an event where neighbours offer up their sweat and toil to the community for the feast that follows. The tradition is rooted in the history of humble fishermen and subsistence farmers who always had to rely on each other for hard physical labour.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... If you've got a task that you've been putting off for ages – clearing out the loft or doing a car boot sale for example – recruit some friends or family to help you. They won't be as sentimental about getting rid of old junk, and you can treat them all to a delicious meal afterwards to say thank you.

USA and Canada

Thanksgiving Day, which is held in early November, dates back to the 1620s, when the Mayflower pilgrims thanked God for a safe journey, a successful settlement, and a good harvest. Today, it's all about getting together with family and feasting, but still serves as a reminder to recognise and celebrate the abundance in our lives.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... We can get so busy with our day-to-day lives that we forget to stop and be grateful. Next time you see a loved one, think of something they've done in the past that made you feel happy, and heartily thank them for it.



INDIA

The ancient Indian practice of yoga has many different facets. One of yoga's core concepts is the connection of mind and body through the function of the breath, or prana. Deep, steady breathing encourages physical relaxation, and results in biological changes such as lowered blood pressure.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... When you're stressed, sit comfortably, breathe in deeply through your nose until your lungs and chest expand and your belly goes out, then exhale very slowly through your mouth saying 'Om'. Repeat three times.

DENMARK

Hygge, pronounced 'whoo-ger', evokes a sense of cosiness and inner warmth – like inviting close friends to a cottage by the sea, or singing songs around the tree at Christmas. There's no stress, no complications, just comfort and a sense of being completely at ease with the world.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... To find your hygge, set aside a night to bring the family together – without smartphones. Put on comfy clothes and snuggle on the sofa to watch a film, or play a board game.



MALI, NIGER & EASTERN SENEGAL

In the Sahel region of Africa, nomadic groups such as the Wodaabe spend their days traversing the desolate landscape of scrubland and sun-seared desert. But how pretty they look! Gold hoops are laced five-fold through ears. Dresses are long, red and graceful. Hair is braided with pink and silver, and eyes are lined with a blue brighter than the midday sky.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... Why not cheer up your wardrobe with the addition of some bold new separates? Bright colours boost your mood, especially red, orange and yellow, even a cheery handbag could help.



What's your secret?

What makes you happy in your part of the world? Write to the address on p93 to tell us and you could win one of 10 copies of Lonely Planet's *Happy: Secrets to Happiness from the Cultures of the World*.



THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

On tiny Tokelau, one of the world's most isolated archipelagos, the individualism that tends to prevail in Western society isn't an option. Comprising three low-lying and tropically idyllic coral atolls – a 20-hour boat ride from nearest neighbour Samoa – remote Tokelau can only function if its minuscule population works together, with those who 'have' helping those who 'have not'.

Every day, the fresh catch is laid out on the beach and the village taupulega (council) dishes it out according to who needs it most, according to the system of inati (sharing).

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... Practice inati from your own home by clearing out unused clothes, books, stationery and cosmetics, and putting them outside with a sign saying they're free for the taking. Or if you've got an apple tree or blackberry bush in the garden that gives you more fruit than you need, invite people to pick the excess to take home. You might be rewarded with a nice apple and blackberry crumble!

TURKEY

When it comes to kicking back, not many countries beat Turkey. A centuries-old tradition of bathing – preferably in 17th century marble hammams – gives it that special edge. Lolling around on warmed stone, sweating luxuriously, dousing yourself with cool water, staring up at a starred dome, perhaps summoning an attendant to rub you down with a giant mitt – can't you just feel your worries dissolving with the steam?

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... You might not have a hammam in your town, but you can bring Turkish delights to your own bathroom by running a hot bath and using the Rituals Hammam Collection (from £8.50, uk.rituals.com) containing scrubs and pastes with the essence of eucalyptus and rosemary to help purge and cleanse your body. These herbs help fight any winter colds and congestion, and aid relaxation.

JAPAN

In Shinto temples throughout Japan, small wooden plaques called ema are provided for people to write down their desires and hopes. They are often decorated with pictures of horses, symbolising a gift. Supplicants might ask for success in exams, a safe journey, a good outcome to a bad situation, or a new car. As each ema is completed, it is hung with the others

garlanding the temple, for the kami (gods) to read.

TOP SANTÉ SAYS... If you're feeling a little unsure about the future, write yourself a note about what you'd like to achieve. The act of writing it down so you can see it clearly in front of you helps you to manifest your dreams and turn them into a reality.

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Katy x Editor

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We rediscovered **HAPPINESS**

Life presents us with twists and turns, but it's how we deal with the down times that determines how well we bounce back. Meet three women who overcame huge challenges to rediscover joy in their lives.

'I'VE WORKED MY WAY TO HAPPINESS.'

Charlotte Balbier, 37, from Wilmslow, Cheshire, runs her own bridalwear business. She used to have panic attacks and severe anxiety but the positive pressure of work and staying busy helped her recover.

I'D ALWAYS BEEN A REAL WORRIER. As a teenager I constantly fretted about fitting in and what people thought about me. After leaving school I went to Manchester University and shared a house with some friends. It was there that I had my first panic attack. It came out of nowhere – I didn't know what it was at the time but it was very scary. My heart started racing and I felt like I couldn't breathe. Afterwards I was tearful and exhausted. The attacks began to occur at least once a month, and it was one of my friends who suggested to me I might be having panic attacks.

I started to feel anxious all the time. I was desperate to be a success but I was worried about what I was going to do with my life. I knew my heart wasn't really in being at university, so a year later, I dropped out and started working for a marketing company.

GETTING SPECIALIST SUPPORT

Through my early twenties the panic attacks got more and more frequent, and I was having two or three a month. I had no confidence, and meeting new people or going to unfamiliar places would make me really anxious. I'd worry that it was going to trigger a panic attack so it was easier to shut the curtains and stay at home. I didn't have a long-term relationship as

I wasn't a fun person to be around, due to my extreme insecurities.

I was stuck in a vicious cycle of fearing going out and trying to make myself feel better by comfort eating. My weight crept up to 20 stone. I went back and forth to the GP, but I was only ever diagnosed with depression. So, I started taking anti-depressants but they didn't help.

By the time I was 23, I was at my wits' end. I went back to the GP and insisted on seeing a specialist. For the first time, I felt like someone was finally listening and it was such a relief when he diagnosed me with severe anxiety. Now I knew what it was, I could finally deal with it. I started taking

anti-anxiety medication, which helped, but it had side effects such as insomnia and drowsiness. I felt that I was just masking what was wrong with me rather than dealing with it.

TIME TO FIGHT BACK

I knew I'd reached a point where I had to do something with my life. I could either let the anxiety take over or fight

back. So I decided to start my own business designing wedding dresses. My mum, Amanda, had her own bridalwear company in the 1980s and my grandparents were pattern cutters, so I'd grown up around the industry and felt like it was in my blood.

My family tried to discourage me at first, as I think they were worried I wouldn't be able to handle the pressure. But, once they could see how determined I was, they were very supportive. It was the biggest risk I'd ever taken but I bit the bullet and threw myself into it.

Building a brand from nothing was exhausting, but I loved every minute. I was so busy, I didn't have time to worry. Strangely enough, work stress didn't bother me – I thrived on it. I

slept better than I had done in years, too.

After the first year, I was surprised at how well things were going. More and more boutiques were stocking my designs, which really boosted my confidence.

As I became better known in the industry, I was invited to guest present a slot on Wedding TV. I knew it would be great

“Helping brides feel beautiful, confident and happy gives me great satisfaction.”

publicity so I said yes. But, in the days leading up to filming, I started to feel incredibly nervous and anxious. I thought up every excuse in the book to back out, but I forced myself to carry on. As the cameras started rolling, my heart raced but, to my surprise, I really enjoyed it and realised I do know what I'm talking about! Afterwards I was on such a high – I felt unstoppable!



Charlotte's new-found responsibility helps to keep her anxiety at bay.

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

The kind of business I was in was really good for my anxiety, as it forced me to be upbeat and positive. I knew I couldn't go and meet stockists or fiancées and be stressed and down. The brides were excited about their big day and it was my job to make them feel special. Ironically, I met a lot of girls who felt insecure and anxious in the lead up to their wedding, and what I loved most of all was making them feel beautiful and confident. It gave me such a buzz.

In 2011, friends introduced me to Teddy, 35, and we started to date. It was the first long-term relationship I'd had and I was determined not to

mess it up. So, I was mortified when I was round his house one evening after two months of being together and had a panic attack. I hadn't had one for three or four months and it came out of nowhere. I was so embarrassed but I knew I had to come clean and explain my anxiety. Thankfully, it didn't faze him. He just accepted it. After eight months he proposed and we got married in December 2013.

Meanwhile, my business was going from strength to strength. A few months after my wedding I was awarded designer of the year by *Wedding Ideas* magazine. I felt so proud of myself and all I'd achieved.

Anxiety doesn't control me any more and the panic attacks have practically stopped. In the past year I've only had one and, funnily enough, that was when I took a week's holiday from work. I'm doing a job I love, and for the first time in my life I finally feel happy and confident in myself. In October last year I stood on stage at the National Wedding Show at the Birmingham NEC and spoke in front of thousands of people – something I could never have done 10 years ago. Work is definitely my happy place!

◆ Do you get anxiety? Read Dr Roger Baker's *Understanding Panic Attacks and Overcoming Fear* (Lion Books).



‘HORSE THERAPY HELPED ME TO HEAL.’

Beverli Rhodes, 54, from Ashford, Kent, is a programme manager for the NHS. She found inner healing through equine therapy after being traumatised in the London bombings.

MY LIFE CHANGED FOREVER ON 7 July, 2005. I was on my way to work as a security consultant and squeezed my way onto a train on London Underground's Piccadilly Line. I was on the same train as Germaine Lindsay, one of four men who carried out suicide bomb attacks that day.

I don't remember the explosion but the blast knocked me unconscious, catapulting me through the air and smashing me into a metal pole, shattering my jaw. I was one of the lucky ones – 52 people died that day, 26 were on my train – but I came out of it a different person. I had constant infections and pain in my mouth, and countless operations, including metal pins set into my gums and silicone implants in my cheeks. I was also left with a limp, constant dizziness and balance problems.

Mentally I was a mess, too. I found it difficult to sleep and when I did, I had terrible nightmares. If I heard emergency sirens, they would trigger flashbacks. I'd feel like I was on the tube again and I couldn't breathe. Wherever I went, I was constantly watching what was going on around me, checking for anything suspicious,

which was depressing and exhausting. Before the bomb I'd been a very sociable, confident person. I had a great job and loved travelling and going out with friends. But afterwards, I didn't want to see anyone. I couldn't work due to my injuries and because I was too terrified to get on a train. I was divorced with four grown-up daughters but they didn't know how to help me and I pushed everyone away.

BACK IN THE SADDLE

Five months after the bombings I was diagnosed with severe Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Over the next few months I tried many types of therapy, including counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), but they all involved reliving the bombing, and I found it too traumatic.

Then, a friend told me about equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP), which involves interacting with horses along with a therapist. The idea behind it is that the horse picks up on and reacts to what you are feeling. I'd never heard of this therapy before but I loved horse riding as a child and I'd kept it up as an adult, riding at a local stables whenever I could.

In June 2006, a few days after a terrible flashback, I attended my first session of EAP in Ely, Cambridgeshire, run by horse trainer Andrew Fox. I was introduced to a beautiful gelding [male horse] called Peppy, who immediately wrapped his body around me protectively. It was as if he could feel how upset and stressed I was and was trying to comfort me, so I felt safe.

I had weekly therapy sessions where I would walk and groom Peppy, lasting from 20 minutes to an hour, depending on how well I felt. I started to sleep much better than I had done in months. A horse doesn't judge you or watch the clock like I felt some therapists had done in the past. Andrew encouraged me to talk to Peppy about how I felt. During one particular session I got very upset, and Peppy sniffed my face like he was drying my tears for me.

Eventually, Andrew said it would be good to have a goal to aim for, so I decided to take part in a big horse show called The Star of London, which is a Western Riding event I'd ridden in before. It was a terrifying prospect, as I hadn't even sat on a horse since the bombings, but I was determined to do it. The first time I got on Peppy, I was absolutely petrified of losing my balance. But after learning posture and breathing techniques, it felt great being sat in the saddle. That was my happy place, so whenever I had a flashback, I'd think of being on Peppy and it would instantly calm me down.

In June 2008, the day of the show arrived. I was extremely nervous and made a few mistakes, but as I galloped round the ring on my new horse Tommy Girl, I felt amazing. A few months before, I couldn't even walk down the stairs – now I was riding at a show. When the prizes were awarded, I couldn't believe it when I was given second place. I cried tears of joy and happiness at how far I'd come.

I'll always have PTSD, but I can control it now. I rarely get flashbacks but if I do, I don't panic, I just deal with them. Horses have healed me physically and emotionally. They helped me find balance again, rebuilt my confidence, and have supported me when I was at my lowest. They've given me my life back and I finally feel happy again.

● Find out about equine assisted psychotherapy at hoofbeat.co.uk.

'RUNNING IS MY HAPPY MEDICINE.'

Nicki Mole, 41, from Redditch, Worcs, is an independent distributor for a beauty company. She took up running to help combat severe postnatal depression.

I HAD MY THIRD CHILD, FREYA, IN a birthing pool at home and it couldn't have gone more smoothly. She was the perfect baby – until she stopped sleeping at 12 weeks old.

My husband Sam is in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, and the birth coincided with him working away for four months. I didn't get any more than two hours' sleep a night for weeks. I had two other children to look after – Charlie, three, and 14-year-old Ben – so I couldn't nap during the day. My parents did what they could to help, but Freya was breastfed and would only settle with me.

I could feel myself slipping deeper into a black hole but I thought it was just sleep deprivation. I'd always been an upbeat, positive person who was frequently on the go, but now I wanted to curl up in a ball and not see anyone.

One day I was driving somewhere on my own and found myself thinking about what would happen if I kept on driving and didn't go home? Or drove my car into a tree? It terrified me that I was having these thoughts but I kept quiet, as I felt guilty. I had a good marriage, two healthy children and a beautiful newborn baby. What right did I have not to be happy?

But when Freya was six months, I finally broke down and told my parents I couldn't cope. The GP diagnosed severe postnatal depression and prescribed antidepressants.

OFF THE COUCH

Sam was home on leave for two months by then. He was very supportive and thankfully Freya's sleeping improved slightly. The tablets helped me get through the day, but I felt the depression was still lurking in the background.

In April 2014, Sam and I saw a poster for a Couch to 5k running app. We'd been talking about having a go at running, as I'd read that exercise was beneficial for people with depression, so we downloaded it onto our phones. I hadn't exercised for years and the first time we went out it nearly killed me!



Nicki is now in training for the London Marathon in April 2016

It was only for a few minutes, but afterwards I lay on the living room floor unable to breathe. It made me really determined, and when we went out again a few days later, I managed to run a bit longer. When Sam went back to work I started running on my own three times a week. It was an escape from the kids, the house, everything, and something purely for me. It also helped boost my confidence as I began to lose weight and tone up.

I finished the Couch to 5k in eight weeks. A fortnight later I did a local 5k parkrun. My parents brought the children to watch and although I was tired, I had a massive grin on my face. 'That's the best antidepressant ever,' I told Dad as I reached the finishing

point. For the first time in a long while I felt genuinely happy and alive again.

I have since joined my local running club, and I now run four times a week.

“Running has boosted my confidence and I'm happier and fitter than ever.”

I always make time for it even if that means getting up at 4.30am and going out before everyone else is up. I feel happy when I'm running. Happy to have some time to myself and to be doing something for me. I've now lost five stone since Freya was born, and a huge milestone came in April this year when I finally stopped taking the

antidepressants. Now I'm happier than I've ever been in my life and the dark feelings have completely gone.

● Learn more about postnatal depression from Dr Sandra Wheatley at potentpsychology.com.

NEW
SERIES

FUTURE-PROOF YOUR HEALTH

Balance your blood sugar

In the third of our new series on living younger for longer, we take a look at how to steer clear of type 2 diabetes.



YOU MAY HAVE SEEN THE recent headlines about diabetes cases rising 60 per cent in the past decade. Thankfully, exciting new research on type 2 diabetes, which makes up the majority of new cases, is giving us a much better understanding of how this condition can be prevented. One of the most recent figures by Public Health England, released in August, showed that five million people in the UK have prediabetes, a form of hyperglycaemia that can lead to diabetes if untreated. Fortunately, an estimated 80 per cent of type 2 diabetes cases could be prevented or delayed by simple lifestyle changes.

The trouble is that some people with prediabetes can go up to 10 years without diagnosis, as symptoms are so subtle,' says Douglas Twenefour, Diabetes UK clinical advisor. But now, because of the rise in prediabetes, GPs regularly offer fasting glucose or blood tests to people regarded as high risk.

'If you're from an ethnic minority – particularly South East Asian, African or African Caribbean – or you have a close family member who has type 2 diabetes, you're more likely to be at risk,' says Douglas. 'But about 80 per cent of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese.'

REDUCE YOUR WEIGHT

While many people believe that diabetes is caused by eating a high-sugar diet, sugar itself isn't what causes the condition, according to Douglas. The contributing factor is the extra weight that a diet high in sugar, and of course other processed food, leads to. 'In particular, it's extra fat around your middle that effects the way that glucose and therefore insulin works,' explains Douglas. 'The extra weight makes your body less sensitive to insulin, so it sends a false message to your pancreas to say



you don't have enough. Your pancreas then goes into overdrive, producing too much insulin and eventually wears out, leading to type 2 diabetes.'

Age is also a factor for type 2 diabetes, with people aged between 45 and 64 making up the bulk of those diagnosed. This can be due to age-related wear and tear on your pancreas, but again, weight is a factor, as the lower muscle mass and a slower metabolism that comes with getting older means we accumulate fat more easily. 'The positive thing is that if you do have a bit of extra weight around your middle – for example, if you are around menopause age, when hormones cause extra fat storage – you only need to lose as little as 3kg to reduce your diabetes risk,' says Douglas.

Evidence suggests that regular exercise is key. 'Anything that increases your heart rate and makes you slightly out of breath is fine, as long as you do it regularly,' says Douglas. 'The benefits of physical activity often stop within 48 hours, so space your activities out to at least five times a week.'

CHOOSE COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

Following a diet low in sugar and processed food will help keep your weight down and also address other glucose-related symptoms, including fatigue, anxiety and restlessness. 'White flour or white grains are lower in nutrients and fibre and break down faster. This means they release glucose quicker into your blood stream,' says

BLOOD SUGAR SUPPORT

A dietary supplement such as chromium helps the glucose in your body to be used by cells more effectively, thereby regulating blood sugar levels. It also supports healthy cholesterol levels. Try GTF Chromium & Antioxidants, £16, wildnutrition.com.



Henrietta Norton, nutritional therapist and co-founder of supplement brand Wild Nutrition. 'For a glucose-friendly alternative, opt for brown rice, quinoa, oats or buckwheat. Your body has greater difficulty breaking down the fibre and bran found in wholegrain foods. This slows down the digestion process, resulting in a lower, slower increase in blood sugar and insulin, putting less stress on the pancreas.'

Refined sugar, found in sweetened drinks, cereal and processed foods, has a high glycaemic index (GI), which means your body processes it too quickly. This results in spikes of glucose and therefore insulin. But this doesn't mean you need to cut sugar all together. Fruit, for example, contains natural sugars and actually helps to balance your glucose. 'Fruits are rich in a fibre known as pectin, which slows down the absorption of simple carbs and sugar,' says Henrietta. 'Two pieces of fruit per day will keep you within a healthy sugar intake. Opt for low-fructose ones such as pears, apples, plums and berries.' And if you combine your fruit snack with nuts or seeds, the fat in them will help you absorb the sugar in the fruit more slowly. 'It's a good idea to include healthy fats, for example avocado or olive oil, in every meal,' says Henrietta. 'When fat mixes with sugar, your food takes much longer to break down in your stomach and therefore provides a slow and steady source of energy.'

● World Diabetes Day is on 14 November. Find out more at diabetes.org.uk. Also turn to page 102 for some low-sugar dessert options.

The low-down on type 2 diabetes

WHAT IS IT? Diabetes is a chronic condition where your body can't convert glucose from your food into energy due to a deficiency in insulin. Type 1 diabetes is often diagnosed from youth and is due to an autoimmune condition. Type 2 can develop later in life due to poor diet and lack of exercise.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

There are an estimated 630,000 diabetics living in the UK unaware of their condition. Some symptoms include feeling drowsy after meals, frequent headaches, urinating

more often, feeling dizzy or irritable if you go more than six hours without food, and excessive thirst. See your GP if you have three or more of these symptoms.

HOW IS IT TREATED? Type 2 is managed by exercise, diet and medication such as metformin, which reduces the amount of glucose your liver releases into your bloodstream, and sulphonylureas, which increases the amount of insulin produced by your pancreas. In advanced cases, insulin injections are necessary.



THE *carbon* CURE

Long used as a miracle toxin trapper, activated charcoal is experiencing a resurgence in popularity in the worlds of health and nutrition.

WHILE YOU might associate charcoal with cosy fires or barbecues, there's a whole other use for this natural resource. When it's burned at high degrees to form activated carbon, charcoal is a valuable health product.

A resurgence in popularity has led to numerous juice bars now offering charcoal smoothies to customers,

and US company Juice Generation has launched a range of activated charcoal juices with added greens or protein, to boost health. Heath store Holland & Barrett is also reporting a 42 per cent year-on-year rise in sales of charcoal products such as biscuits and supplements.

However, using charcoal for health is nothing new. One of the earliest references to using it as a curative dates back 3,500 years to an Egyptian scroll, which described its use in disinfecting

wounds. Fast-forward to 1831, when French pharmacist Pierre Touery, who was keen to prove the medical benefits of charcoal, drank 15g of poisonous strychnine – 10 times the lethal dose – washed down with an equal amount of charcoal. He lived because the charcoal quickly neutralised the poison by gathering toxins and impurities into its complex structure. They could then be carried through his digestive tract and gut without being assimilated by his body.

A natural remedy

So why the recent comeback for charcoal? 'As people become more wary of prescribed medicine's side effects, they're seeking out more natural but effective ways to treat their ailments,' says pharmacist John Briggs from Bragg's Originals – a company that's been producing charcoal health products for more than 150 years.

Considering that one in five people have gastric problems, it's no wonder that activated charcoal, which originally came to the health market in the early 19th century for its digestive benefits, has stepped up as a remedy for conditions such as indigestion, acid reflux, Crohn's disease and diarrhoea.

Initially, the public was put off by the thought of downing a glass of silty water. 'People would have to mix up this very fine, dusty black powder and drink it immediately. It tasted pretty nasty so understandably wasn't appealing,' says John. 'So back in 1860, when Bragg's was a London bakery looking to diversify, we experimented with baking it into biscuits.'

The biscuits were a hit, relieving indigestion, flatulence, bloating and other digestive problems for the customers. 'As luck would have it, consultants from nearby Harley Street who went to the bakery for their lunch cottoned on to the health benefits and started recommending it to their

patients too.' Soon, the biscuits were in Harrods and grocery stores, touted as the latest health superfood.

Charcoal is on the World Health Organisation's List of Essential Medicines, and is the first port of call in emergency rooms around the world for cases of poisoning and some drug overdoses. 'Activated charcoal is extremely gentle and works in conjunction with your body,' says John. 'It passes straight through your digestive system, taking out the bad stuff, but doesn't cause side effects by going into your bloodstream or affecting your organs.'

Activated charcoal can help to relieve indigestion, flatulence and heartburn.



How it works

'When organic matter such as wood or bone is burned in the absence of air, it makes charcoal – like the type we see used in art lessons and on wood fires,' says John. 'For activated charcoal, which is technically carbon, it goes on another couple of stages and is burned to 1000°C. The best source is coconut shell, because it has a rigid cellulose structure, meaning when it's burned,

the unique latticework of the shell remains. It's this honeycomb-like structure that takes in all the bad stuff, holding it in the multitude of pores to be carried safely out of your digestive system.'

Some of that 'bad stuff' comes from the unfriendly bacteria that live in

COCONUT SHELL CHARCOAL

Coconut shell is said to produce the highest quality charcoal because after heating it has a very large number of micropores, meaning it can trap lots of unwanted toxins and prevent them being absorbed by your body.



This close up of coconut shell charcoal is magnified by 1,340 times!

your gut. While we need bacteria in our intestines in order for our immune and digestive systems to work properly, when bad bacteria such as staphylococcus or yeast overgrowth such as candida outweighs the good, it can lead to stomach upsets, bloating and lethargy.

'Bacteria are living organisms, and it's the waste products called endotoxins that they excrete that do us harm,' says John. 'If your body doesn't agree with particular endotoxins, your brain tells your stomach to attack them and try to flush them out. Activated charcoal works in synergy with your body to mop up these endotoxins, then excrete them faster and more easily than your body would do without it.'

This begs the question of how charcoal knows the difference between toxins, bad bacteria and poisons, and good nutrition from food. 'Activated charcoal won't absorb proteins, minerals, vitamins or carbohydrates, simply because the molecules are too big to collect in its pores,' says John. 'It can, however, attract fat molecules, which are smaller.'

Charcoal's efficacy as a fat binder was proved back in the 1980s, as detailed in *The Lancet*. Tests showed that people who took two tablespoons of activated charcoal three times a day for four weeks, had 40 per cent lower LDL (bad cholesterol) levels than before the study.

CULINARY CARBON

It's not only scientists who are experimenting with charcoal. Chefs are investigating different recipes using the black stuff. In Manchester, The French restaurant offers a dish of ox in coal oil, while Shears Yard in Leeds serves up hake wrapped in serrano ham with charcoal mayonnaise. Mixologists are joining in on the trend too. The Bull in a China Shop cocktail bar in Shoreditch has created a charcoal version of a traditional Old Fashioned, blending activated charcoal with whisky and angostura bitters for a sweet, peaty taste.



*A daily dose
of charcoal
tablets can help
to flush out
ageing toxins*



PICK OF THE CHARCOAL

- **Charcoal Capsules** help to rid you of digestive discomfort. £9.99, 200 capsules (260mg) hollandandbarrett.com.

- **Bragg's Originals Charcoal Biscuits** help to reduce gases and bloating in your digestive system, and also contain seven per cent fibre to assist in digestive transit. £2.20, charcoal.uk.com.

- **Baldwin's Charcoal Powder** is made from coconut shells. Add it to smoothies for a cleansing carbon kick. £5.19 for 100g, baldwins.co.uk.

- **Miller's Damsels charcoal wafers** are made from wholemeal flour for a good source of slow-release energy. £1.99, waitrose.com.

Black to the future

There are some exciting ongoing studies into different medical uses for activated charcoal. Research funded by the British Medical Research Council suggested that when given to mice with malaria, charcoal would bind to the disease and halt its progression, while not interfering with the anti-malarial drugs that were fighting the virus. Activated charcoal was also shown to help those with kidney failure by mopping up toxins. This enabled the gut flora to repopulate and help the

body to strengthen in order to fight the disease.

A study at Imperial College London also looked at its use in the treatment of conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis. It found that activated charcoal helped reduce symptoms by binding with inflammation-causing proteins.

While new medical advances are being made with activated charcoal, you can still reap the health and cleansing benefits, just as generations before us have done.

KEEP YOUR WATER CLEAR

You could already be feeling the benefits of activated charcoal in your everyday life without realising it. Carbon filters have been used for hundreds of years for removing sediment, volatile organic compounds and bad tastes or odours from water. They are used in domestic homes, as well as some municipal water treatment centres. They're often found in jugs, such as this Bobble Jug with inbuilt electro-positive carbon filter. £15, ethicalsuperstore.com.



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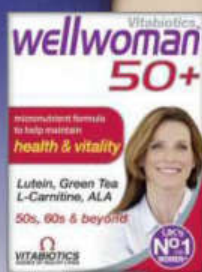
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Almased was first developed in Germany to help improve people's energy levels. Not only did it do this, but it also resulted in weight loss. Furthermore, a significant difference between Almased and other weight loss programmes was found - fat was lost while essential muscle mass was retained¹. Over 25 years of scientific research has shown Almased's benefits for weight loss, long-term weight management and overall health and wellness.

WHAT IS ALMASED?

Almased is a unique powdered drink mix of soya, yogurt and honey, with added vitamins and minerals. Most importantly, this formula is free from artificial flavours, preservatives and stimulants. It is also gluten-free, non-GMO and suitable for vegetarians and those with diabetes.

Fermented Soya - Low in saturated fat, this easily digested plant-based protein can assist in the growth and maintenance of essential muscle mass.

Probiotic Yogurt - Calcium in the yogurt contributes to the normal function of digestive enzymes, helping to nourish and aid healthy digestion.

Honey - Provides natural sweetness to enhance the taste. It also has a prebiotic effect which further supports intestinal health.

What's more, Almased's vitamin and mineral content provides for your energy and nutritional needs. Biotin, phosphorus and B12 contribute to normal energy-yielding metabolism, whereas folic acid assists in the reduction of tiredness and fatigue.

¹ Deibert, P et al (2004). Weight loss without losing muscle mass in pre-obese and obese subjects induced by a high-soya-protein diet. International Journal of Obesity; 28(10):1349-52.



“Almased helped me lose 5 stones. I feel fitter, healthier and have lots more energy. I have recommended it to everyone. Almased really has changed my life.”

Gayle from Glasgow

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- ✓ **A pre-or post- workout boost**
Fuel your body with half a serving (2.5tbsps) of Almased before you exercise and the other half after your workout, ideal for muscle recovery.
- ✓ **Late night snack**
Have Almased 1-2 hours before bed to aid a restful sleep and to support cellular and muscular renewal while your body is at rest.
- ✓ **Vegetarian protein supplement**
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50g (5tbsp) of Almased can be mixed with 200-350ml of water or low fat milk and 1-2tsp of oils rich in essential fatty acids (flaxseed, walnut, rapeseed or olive). Replace 1 or 2 daily meals, for weight loss and weight maintenance. Additionally it can be used as supportive nutrition to help fuel your exercise and promote recovery.

Almased is a food product that has been proven safe and effective in weight control when used as part of our programme. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Almased is not specially processed, formulated or intended for the dietary management of diabetes. As always, consult your doctor or healthcare team before beginning any weight loss programme or reducing your dosage of current medications. Substituting two daily meals of an energy-restricted diet with meal replacements contributes to weight loss.

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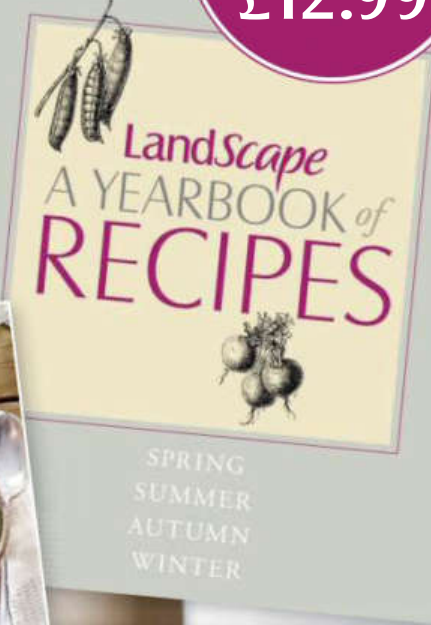
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Stretch out your tension

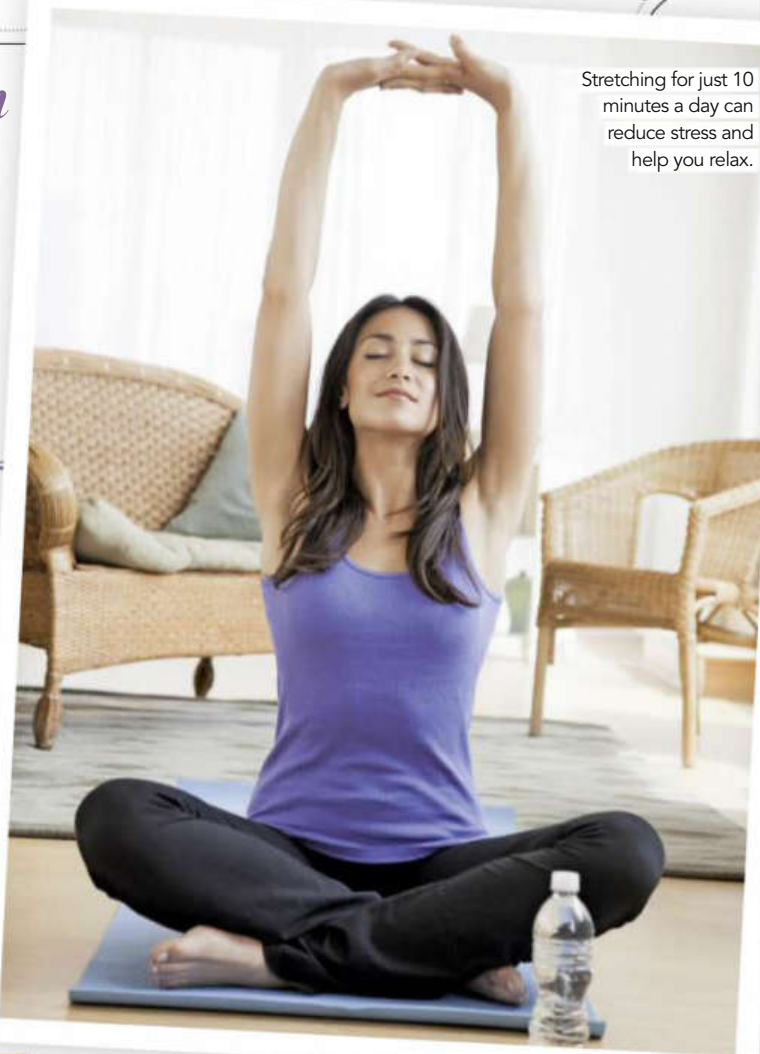
Discover the benefits of stretching in a new book designed to help you see what's going on in your body. *Stretching with Ease* (CICO) guides you through 73 stretches that target different muscle groups such as your hamstrings, glutes and abdominals. Each one includes an image so you can see which muscles you are using as well as breathing instructions to make the most of the stretch. £14.99, rylandpeters.com.

Stretching for just 10 minutes a day can reduce stress and help you relax.



STAY VISIBLE

Now the nights are drawing in, make yourself more visible when exercising outside with Albedo100 reflective spray paint. Simply spray it onto your clothes or bike for a reflective glow when headlights shine on you. The spray can be easily washed off. £12.99, albedo100.co.uk.



CHANGE ON THE GO

If you cycle to work, or head off dressed for an early gym session, the Henty Wingman bag is just what you need. It's ribbed to keep your smart clothes crease-free, and rolls up into a compact satchel-style bag that can be carried comfortably on your back.

It comes in a range of colours. £119, henty.cc.



It's muddy madness!

Enjoy the change of season and keep your fitness levels high by entering a muddy challenge. The 6k Royal Marine commando-training course on 14 November at Hever Castle, Kent, includes 15 obstacles set over wild terrain, including a 30m wading pool! You get to choose how tough you want to be treated, by selecting from Just Get Me Round, Family Friendly or Treat Me Like A Commando! Entry costs £75. Find out more at commandoseries.co.uk.



FIND THE TIME TO *work out*

Is keeping fit all in the timing? We look at how exercise can be affected by the time of day, so you can get the most from your workout.

THERE'S AN IDEAL TIME for everything – eating, sleeping, socialising or focusing on work – but did you know you have an optimum time for exercise too? It all depends whether you relate to an owl personality and are more alert at night, or a lark and are more energetic when you wake up. Interestingly, whether you're a lark or an owl isn't only determined by whether you feel like more of a 'morning person' or 'night person', it's actually rooted in your natural body temperature. In the *US Journal of Sports Medicine and Physical Fitness*, scientists revealed that peak performances in exercise coincide with peak body temperature. They found larks experienced their

peak temperature earlier in the day than owls, so their muscle function and circulation were better equipped for exercising in the morning.

AM **Are you a lark?**

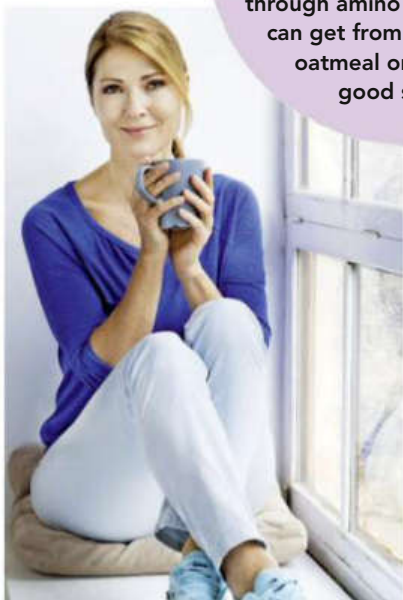
If you naturally wake up early and find that you can get going without feeling too groggy, it's likely you're a lark. This has plenty of benefits when it comes to exercising. 'I try to steer everyone, where life permits, into morning workouts, says exercise specialist Tim Weeks. 'Your body naturally experiences an endorphin peak post

exercise: you become more productive, feel more confident and in a positive state of mind for the rest of the day.'

The other benefit of exercising in the morning is that you get it over and done with so you won't end up finding excuses not to do it later on.

You can maximise these benefits by kickstarting your morning with a healthy coffee. Caffeine increases circulation, and when you drink it before exercise it improves your speed and endurance by boosting blood flow. Recent research published in the *International Journal of Sport Nutrition and Exercise Metabolism* found that working out after having a cup of coffee may also accelerate weight loss. The study concluded that trained athletes who consumed caffeine pre-exercise burned about 15 per cent more calories for three hours post-exercise, compared to those who took a placebo.

TOP Santé TIP
Not all of us like to eat early in the morning, but if you're only working out for half an hour, you'll be fine without food. It is important to eat afterwards though. Muscles repair themselves through amino acids, which you can get from protein. Eggs, oatmeal or salmon are good sources.



WORDS: ELEANOR TUCKER. PHOTOGRAPHS: JUMP FOTO, GETTY, SHUTTERSTOCK. MORE INFORMATION: TIMWEEKS.COM, DUNCAN VINCENT - GRACEBELGRAVIA.COM.



PM **Are you an owl?**

If it takes you a while to get going in the morning, but you've got plenty of energy in the evening, you can embrace the benefits of being an owl. Michael Smolensky, author of *The Body Clock Guide To Better Health* (Holt McDougal), says that if your exercise involves risk of physical injury, such as lifting weights, it's better to do it later in the afternoon after your body's had time to loosen up. Joints and muscles are up to 20 per cent more flexible in the early evening, so your fitness performance is stronger, with less chance of injury.

It's not just your muscles that are more awake later in the day. A study by Albany Medical College in New York found that lung function is a surprising

17 per cent more efficient at 5pm than at midday.

Professor Greg Atkinson from Liverpool John Moores University says: 'Almost every



world record in track and field athletics and cycling events has been broken in the afternoon or evening.'

Although you might not be attempting to break records, it's satisfying to know that if you're aiming to beat your own personal best, you'll feel much more up to the challenge in the evening.

TOP Santé TIP

If you're exercising before your main meal, you might need some quick-release sugar. Opt for a few Medjool dates with five or six nuts, as the healthy fats in these help the sugar absorb more slowly into your bloodstream.

WHAT TO DO WHEN

There are optimum times to do certain activities depending on the nature of the exercise and what you want to glean from it.



To lose weight...

Choose walking, swimming or yoga in the morning. A study published in the journal *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* measured how women responded to food after exercising first thing in the morning. When the participants walked briskly for 45 minutes, they were less tempted by unhealthy yet tempting food photos than when they did no exercise at all, proving that the exercise helped them make healthier choices.



To achieve a goal...

Choose running, rowing, dance classes or cardio classes in the afternoon. Your body temperature peaks between 2pm and 6pm, which means you'll be able to put more effort into energetic workouts, resulting in bigger fitness gains – perfect if your goal is beating your personal best.



To build muscle and tone...

Choose weight training in the late afternoon. Your protein synthesis, or ability to use dietary proteins for muscle repair, peaks between 5pm and 7pm so you'll maximise recovery. This means that early evening is the best time of day for more difficult workouts such as CrossFit, High Intensity Interval Training or Kettlebells.



To improve sleep...

Choose aerobic activity in the afternoon and yoga in the evening. Research by the National Sleep Foundation showed that scheduling aerobic exercise for the afternoon helped deepen sleep, and yoga in the evening cut the time it took to fall asleep. In a study by Harvard Medical School, 20 chronic insomniacs who practised yoga breathing, postures and meditation before bed over eight weeks slept better and for longer.

Walking before breakfast can boost your metabolism and promote weight loss



Exercise to IMPROVE YOUR MOOD

Whether you're looking to tone up or increase your wellbeing,
you can do both without leaving the house this winter
thanks to our mini mood-boosting workouts.

YOU KNOW THAT wonderful post-exercise feeling, when you're buzzing from the endorphins rushing around your body and feel that anything is possible? Well, you can get that same energised feeling without stepping foot into the cold, drizzly November weather.

Dark mornings and even darker evenings can put a dampener on mood and motivation. But by creating your own indoor workout to follow over the coming weeks, you'll not only trim your

body but stay upbeat and positive whatever the forecast.

Exercising at home before your day begins also helps warm you up naturally, revving up your internal thermostat, so you don't feel as chilly when you step outside. Jump-starting your metabolism in this way, and working up a good sweat either before or after breakfast, will ensure your body releases natural pain relievers called endorphins, which make you feel happier and more productive. By feeling brighter and more alert, you'll be far less likely to resort to unhealthy

stimulants such as excessive caffeine or sugar to get you going.

Exercise is also frequently linked to feeling an increased sense of calm, leading to better mental health and general physical and mental wellbeing. Research from Princeton University published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, suggests that exercise reorganises the brain so that its response to stress is reduced and anxiety is less likely to interfere with normal brain function.

So, get happy this winter by making home workouts part of your routine.

6 MOOD-BOOSTING, BODY-ENHANCING HOME WORKOUTS

Take your pick from the mini workouts below. They not only target certain body parts but help you feel more positive, from increasing focus and clarity, to boosting your happy hormones. Aim to do 3-5 workouts a week and vary them depending on your mood each day.

1 TO FEEL MOTIVATED AND INCREASE MUSCLE TONE: DO FULL-BODY CIRCUITS

30 MINS

This workout is designed to hit every muscle. It alternates between resistance-based work, cardio and abs. Perform as a back-to-back circuit with as little rest as possible.

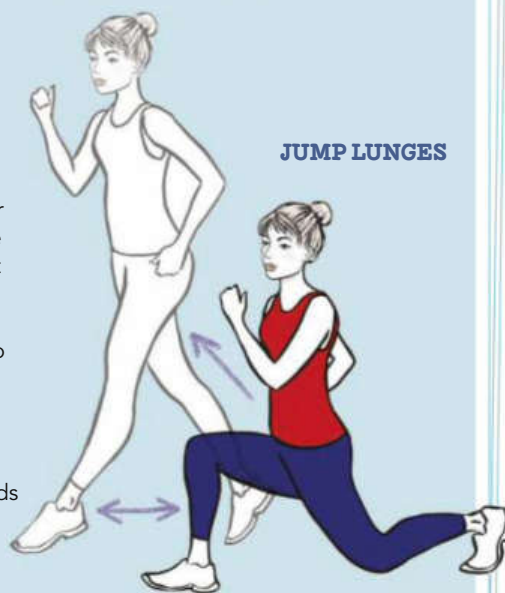
Complete 3-5 rounds. Use the first 1-2 rounds as a warm up, so take it fairly easy, then increase the pace for the rest of the rounds. You can rest between each round, depending on your fitness level. The fitter you get, the less rest you will need each time.

- 5 full or half press-ups
- 10 squats
- 10 lunges on each leg
- 20 mountain climbers on each side In a plank position, bring alternating knees towards your chest. Hold the plank for 30-60 secs.

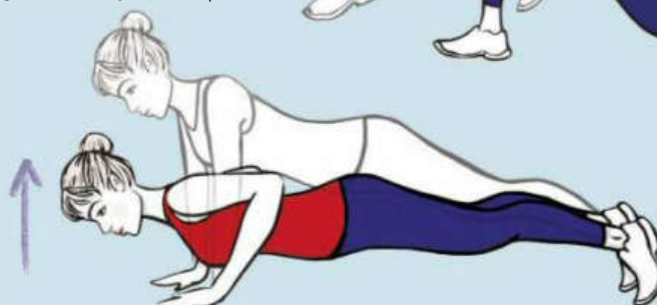
● 20 jump lunges Start in a lunge, spring up off the floor and switch leg positions in the air, landing with the other foot in front.

● 10 jump squats Start in a squat position, then jump up straightening your knees, and land as softly as you can back down into the squat.

● 5 close-grip press-ups These are done with your hands right next to your armpits.



JUMP LUNGES



CLOSE-GRIP PRESS-UPS

2 TO IMPROVE MENTAL FOCUS AND BOOST METABOLISM: GO ALL OUT WITH HIGH INTENSITY TRAINING

20 MINS High-intensity interval training (HIIT) involves alternating between bursts of fast exercise and lower-intensity rest periods. This workout will elevate your heart rate, ramp up metabolism and work your abdominal area. It's also excellent for quickly increasing blood flow, which helps the cells in your brain function faster. 'This workout can be done in under 20 minutes, and you'll also benefit from what's called the 'afterburn' effect,' says personal trainer Matt Whitmore. 'This is where your metabolism is elevated for up to 24 hours after the session, meaning you continue to burn calories at a higher rate.'

- **30 secs of jump squats, followed by 30 secs rest** Repeat 10 times. Start the first couple of rounds with normal squats (no jump) to help you warm up. 'Feel free to regress the exercise if needed by performing alternate squats with speed but no jump in-between,' says Matt.
- **30 secs of mountain climbers, followed by 30 secs rest** Repeat 10 times.
- **3 rounds of core circuit** Perform each of the below for 40 secs back-to-back. Rest if and when needed. Each round should take 2 mins.

Russian twists Sit on the floor with your knees bent (feet raised to make it harder) with your back straight. Clasp your hands together in front of your heart. Slowly twist your upper body from side to side so your arms move like a pendulum.

Leg lowers Lying on the ground facing up, raise your legs to the ceiling. Slowly lower your straight legs towards the floor while keeping your lower back pressed into the ground. If you feel your back wants to arch, bend your knees a bit to make it easier.

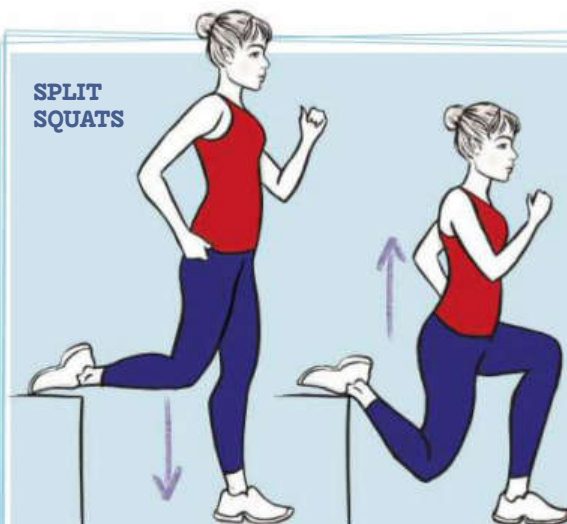
Knee to opposite elbow Starting in a press-up position, bend one knee and bring it towards the opposite elbow. Repeat on the other side.

RUSSIAN TWIST



KNEE TO OPPOSITE ELBOW

SPLIT SQUATS



PLANK WALKS



3 TO FEEL EMPOWERED AND STRONG: WORK YOUR LEGS, ABS AND BUM

25 MINS This workout is the ultimate empowerment-boosting routine. 'You'll tone the large, power-house muscles in your legs and bum, which not only helps to boost metabolism because more muscle means more calories burnt at rest, but also helps you feel stronger and more self assured,' says Matt.

Complete each group of three exercises back to back, rest for 2-3 mins then repeat the whole set 3-5 times. Take your time on the movements, as the muscles have to work harder when they spend longer under tension. Only once you have completed all exercises and sets in the first triple set can you move on to the next.

● **10 split squats on each leg** Place your foot on a step (top of shoe facing downwards), with your other foot about half a metre in front. Bend your front leg until your back knee almost touches the floor, then straighten to the start position.

● **10 alternating step-ups** Go up your stairs two at a time. If you can do three in one go, even better. The higher the step, the harder it targets your glutes. March up 10 times starting with your left leg, then repeat with the right leg.

● **10 plank walks** Start in a full push-up position, arms fully out stretched. Walk your feet in towards your hands, then stand up. Return your hands to the floor and walk your feet back out. Hold the plank for 5 secs.

4 TO FEEL CONFIDENT AND WALK TALL: TRY SUSPENSION TRAINING FOR POSTURE AND TO TONE UP

30 MINS

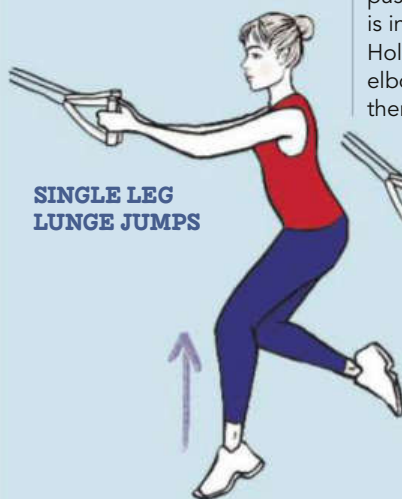
'Performing three sets of this circuit to tone your whole body and improve posture will help you feel energised to start your day,' says celebrity trainer James Duigan. You'll need a TRX suspension training kit (£198, uk.shop.trxtraining.com). If you rest for 1 min between exercises and 3 mins between circuits, it shouldn't take longer than 30 mins.

● **15 TRX rows** Facing upwards with feet pushing into the floor, ensure your body is in a straight line, diagonal to the floor. Hold the handles in both hands, keep elbows close to the body as you bend them, pause at the top and then extend

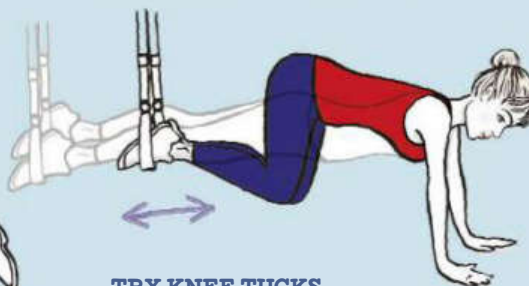
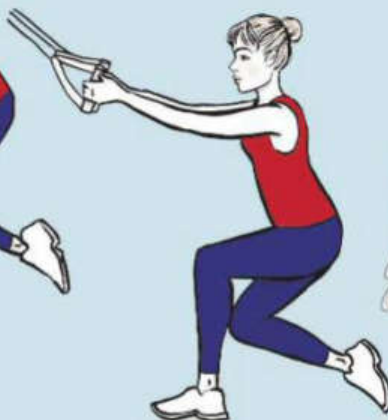
elbows again. This works the back, shoulders and bicep muscles.

● **10 single leg lunge jumps on each side** Holding both handles in one hand, balance on your front foot. Bend your knee until your bottom is as close to the floor as possible, then straighten your leg again and do a mini jump. This challenges your core stability as well as your lower and upper leg muscles. You may not be able to squat all the way to the floor at first, so go as low as you can, keeping your chest and shoulders held up so as not to slump forward.

● **10 TRX knee tucks** With hands on the floor and body in a plank position, place both feet (top of shoes facing towards floor) in the handles. Steady yourself before slowly bending your knees towards your chest then extending them again. This really works your core.



SINGLE LEG LUNGE JUMPS



TRX KNEE TUCKS

5 TO FEEL ENERGISED: SCULPT YOUR SHOULDERS, BOTTOM AND ABS

15 MINS

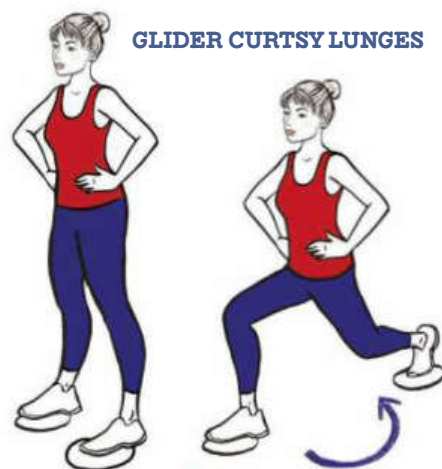
You'll need stretch bands with three different levels of resistance (try bodyism.com), two gliding discs (glidingdiscs.com), two cans of tomatoes or 1kg hand weights for this workout. 'Three sets of this circuit will help you feel happier and stronger, as it fires up your nervous system in readiness for the day ahead. It's particularly good after a bad night's sleep,' says James. 'This is because it's very short, meaning it doesn't elevate your stress hormone cortisol, which tends to be higher when you're tired.'

● **20-step tube walk** Step into the band so it's around both legs, just above your knees. Take 20 steps sideways with straight legs, then 20 with bent. This tones the muscles in your bottom and outer thighs, so they can better support your lower back.

● **15 glider curtsy lunges on each leg** Place your front and back feet on the gliders, in lunge position with legs a foot apart. Slowly slide (or step if you don't have gliders) your back foot so it crosses behind your front leg. Then glide or step it back to the starting position.

● **1-min arm circles** Holding 1kg weights or cans of tomatoes in each hand, reach your arms out to the side and make small circles with your straight arms. This works the shoulders, arm and upper back muscles.

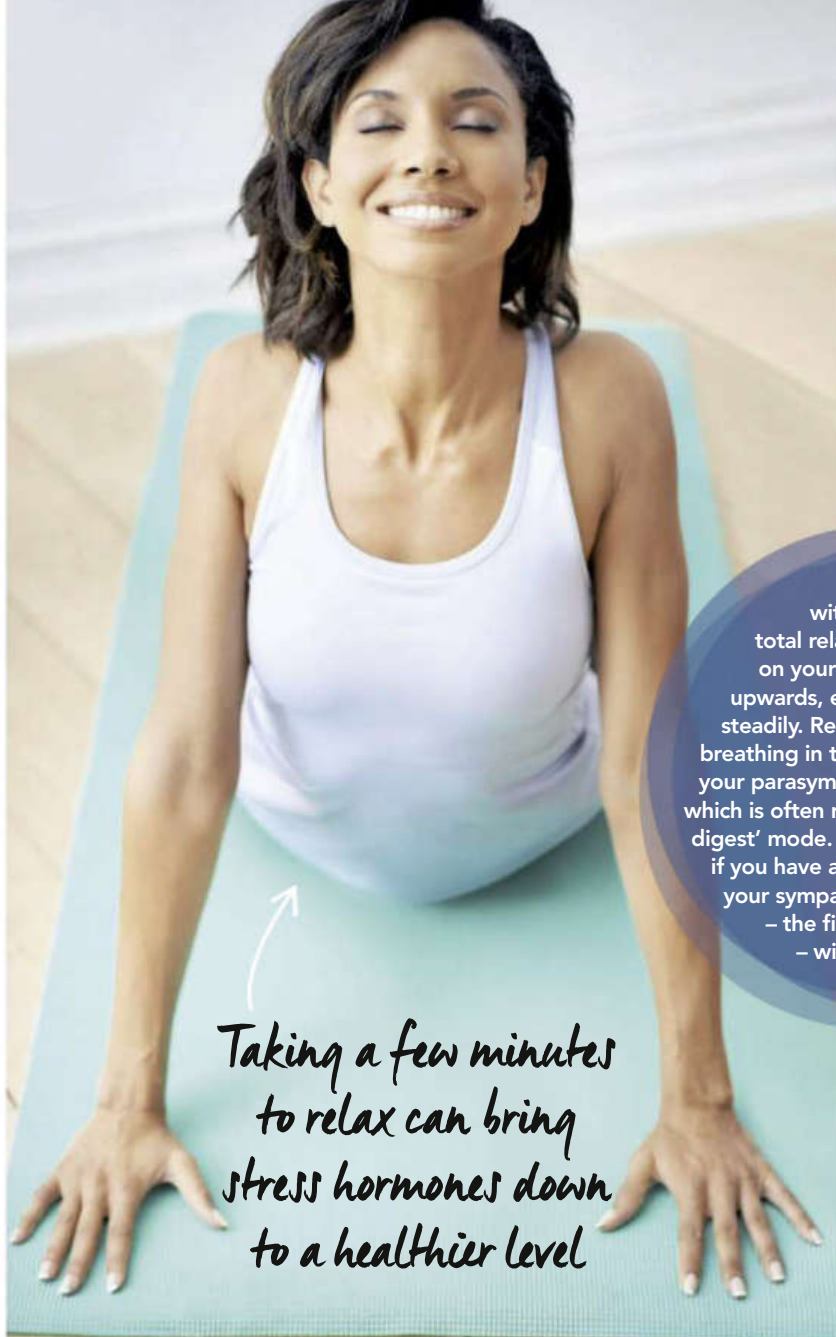
● **10 pikes with gliders** From a plank position, step your feet one at a time onto the gliders. Lift your bottom and tense your abdominals to slide your feet in towards your hands, until you are in an inverted V shape. Return feet slowly to the start position. If you don't have gliders, you can use small towels and do it on a polished floor.



GLIDER CURTSY LUNGES

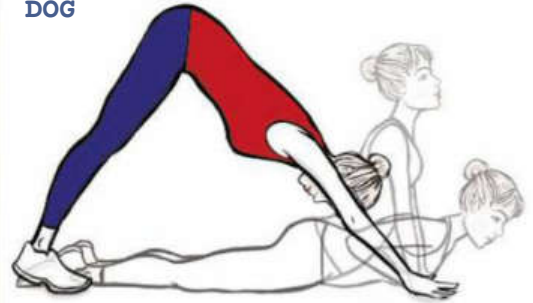


PIKE GLIDERS



Taking a few minutes to relax can bring stress hormones down to a healthier level

DOWNWARD DOG



TREE POSE



● Finish with 10 minutes' total relaxation, lying down on your back, palms facing upwards, eyes closed, breathing steadily. Relaxing and focusing on breathing in this way helps to activate your parasympathetic nervous system, which is often referred to as the 'rest and digest' mode. This is important because if you have a busy, stressful lifestyle, your sympathetic nervous system – the fight or flight mode – will be dominant.

you can, heels reaching to the floor.

On your next inhale, come back into a plank position then bend your knees to place them on the mat, followed by your chest and chin as you bend your arms. Exhale and lower your hips, support your weight on your hands and push your chest through and up, straightening your arms so you're now in an upward-facing dog with arms extended. Feel the stretch across your chest and squeeze your shoulder blades together. Hold for an inhale, and on the next exhale, push back onto your feet to return to downward dog, passing through the plank position.

● 30-sec tree pose on each leg

Stand on one leg with the foot of the other leg pushed into the inside of your upper thigh. Place your hands into prayer position in front of your heart. Count 15 breaths in and out. If you wobble out of the pose, compose your balance and start again. It's natural to wobble at first, so work up to balancing for longer each time.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Matt Whitmore – fitterfood.com.
James Duigan – bodyism.com.

6 TO DE-STRESS AND FEEL RELAXED: FOCUS ON BREATH AND BALANCE

15 MINS

This is a great one to try at night. 'Doing 3-4 sets of this circuit will calm you down, lower your cortisol levels, therefore reducing stress, and help you sleep better. It will also improve your flexibility,' says James. The workout includes elements of yoga, deep breathing and balance, all of which help promote relaxation, calming your central nervous system.

● **20 hip extensions** Lie on your back with bent knees and heels on the floor, close enough to your bottom that you can touch them with outstretched arms. As you exhale, slowly push your hips up as far as they will go until you're making

a straight line with your body from knees to lower ribs. Hold for 3 secs then gently return to the floor as you inhale.

● **15 slow bodyweight squats** Stand with feet hip-distance apart, inhale and bend your knees until your thighs are parallel to the floor or a little lower if you can manage it without your heels coming off the floor. Exhale as you push strongly through your heels back up to an upright position. Breathe out on the way up, and in on the way down.

● 10 downward-to-upward dogs

Start in downward-dog position, with your feet and hands on the mat, arms straight and bottom high in the air. Relax your head and look towards your knees. Straighten your legs as much as

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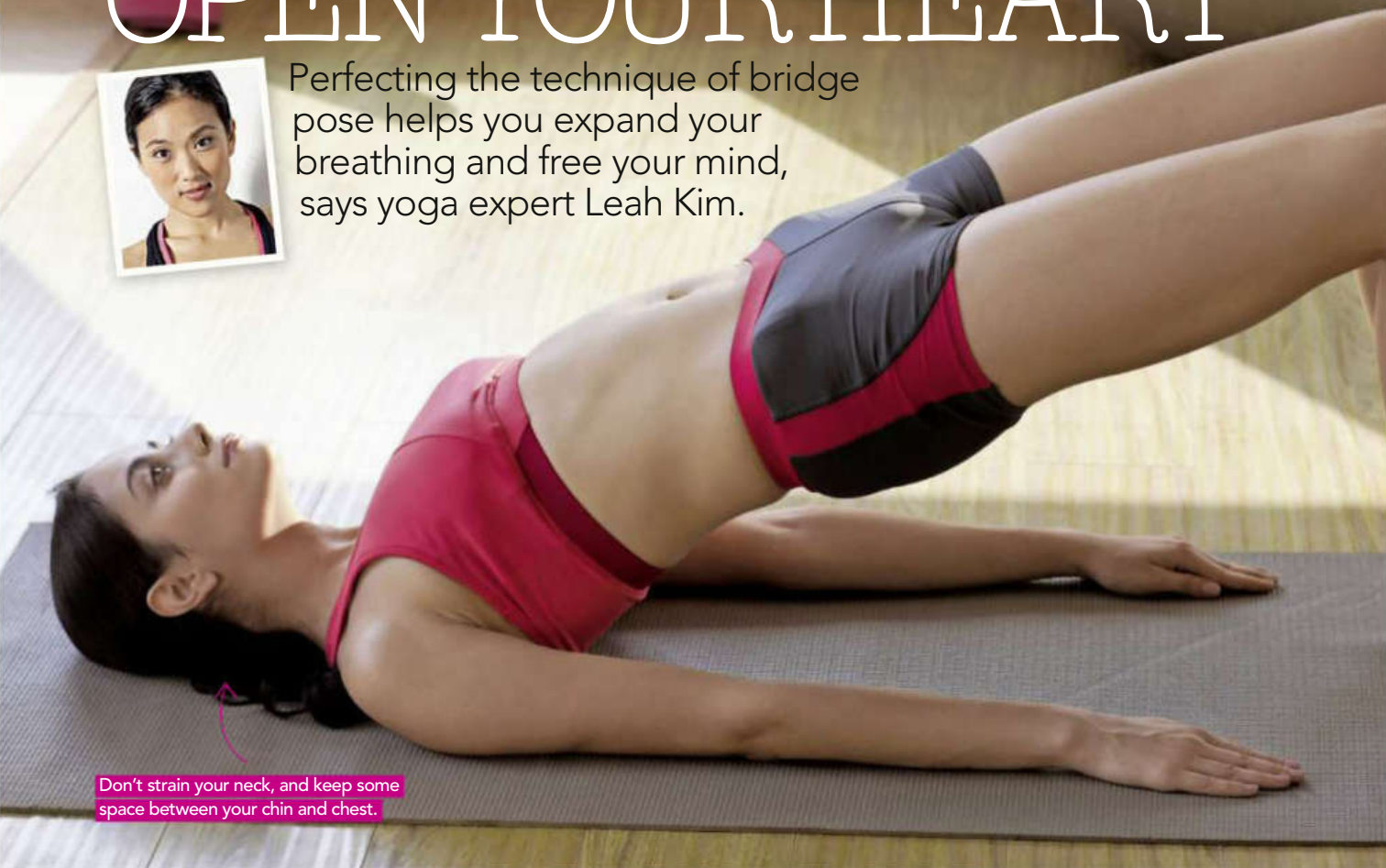
NEW
SERIES

MASTER THE MOVE

OPEN YOUR HEART



Perfecting the technique of bridge pose helps you expand your breathing and free your mind, says yoga expert Leah Kim.



Don't strain your neck, and keep some space between your chin and chest.

MANY OF US spend our days sitting at a desk with our shoulders rounded and spine hunched, but you can counteract this tension with the bridge pose. Bad sitting posture and everyday stresses cause our back muscles to ache and our chest muscles to tighten, but this simple yoga pose, which is suitable for all levels, uncurls your spine and releases tension around your chest and shoulders.

Yogis believe that backbending poses such as bridge are also about opening the heart space. Quite literally, in a backbend you are expanding your chest and inflating your rib cage and lungs. Because of this, you are able to take bigger inhalations, bringing more energy and oxygen into your body. It's

a fearless, open posture that boosts your energy levels and elevates your mood.

For maximum benefits, practice bridge pose every day, doing three repetitions and holding each one for 5-8 breaths, lifting your back up as much as is comfortable for you. You can increase the number of repetitions and breaths as you become more adept at the pose.

Make sure you are warm before going into the move, and never force your body to go further than it wants to. Your lumbar spine in particular can be compressed in a backbend, which could lead to pain and injury, especially if you have existing problems in your lower back. As much as a backbend is about your spine, equally important is the strength of your legs to hold you steady. You must also be able to breathe fully. If you feel your breathing becoming short, it's time to come out of the pose.

FOOT POSITION

Lay on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Your feet should be about hip-width apart and pointing directly forward. When you put your hands flat on the floor, they should be close to your heels. There is a tendency to let the feet turn out and it is very important that you avoid this as it can lead to compression in your lumbar spine. Press both feet firmly into the ground, especially pressing into the inner edges of your feet and the base of your big toes.

TORSO MOVEMENT

Slowly begin to lift your hips off the floor, curling your spine up, starting from your tailbone. Lift as much of your back off the floor without lifting your shoulders. Try to press your chest away from your feet and toward your



For those who have more yoga experience, wheel pose is a natural progression from bridge, once you build up good shoulder mobility and arm strength. Here's how to get into this impressive-looking position:

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart, as with bridge.
- Place your hands directly underneath your shoulders, with your fingers pointing towards your feet. Spread your fingers wide. Start to push the floor away with your hands, lifting your head up and lightly bringing the top of your head onto the floor.
- Slowly straighten your arms, lifting your head and the rest of your body off the floor. Lengthen through your legs so you

feel a stretch across the tops of your thighs and hip flexors. Your elbows should hug in towards your head.

● Visualise the back of your body draped over a giant beach ball – keeping your low back spacious. Completely relax your neck and let your head hang loose. If you feel any pinching, come out of the pose.

● To come out of the pose safely, tuck your chin towards your chest, bend your elbows and lower the back of your head and upper back onto the ground first, followed by the rest of your body.

chin, while keeping your chin neutral so that you maintain the space around your neck. The front of your torso should feel stretched and lengthened. It should feel as if the muscles along your spine are engaged and gently squeezing together, and your lumbar spine shouldn't feel compressed. Your chest and collarbones will broaden with each breath – literally opening up the space around your heart. As with all yoga poses, ensure that you are able to breathe freely.

HEAD PLACEMENT

Gently press the back of your head into the floor, and make sure you maintain a little space along the back of your neck where you have a natural curve. There needs to be a space – the size of a grapefruit – between your chin and chest.

LEG STRENGTH

Engage all your muscles at the back of your legs. Without actually moving your feet, create the sensation that they're dragging back towards your hips. Keep your thigh muscles engaged, especially the inner thighs, which should be slightly rolled inward towards the floor, to support your lifted spine. Draw your knees in towards each other, as if you were holding a block between them. You should feel a stretch across the tops of your thighs and hips, and your pelvis should be tilting up towards your chin.

ARM STABILITY

When you initially raise your spine and hips, keep your hands flat on the floor to give you added support. Once your back is raised, if you want to increase the stretch across your chest, interlace

your fingers underneath you. Rock from side to side to move your shoulder blades a little bit further underneath you, bringing them closer together. Your arm muscles should be strongly engaged, creating a triangle. Try to keep your elbows on the ground so they do not hyperextend.

TO FINISH

To come out of the pose safely, unclasp your hands, and, very slowly, vertebra by vertebra, uncurl your spine back down to the floor. Take a few moments in stillness, noticing how you feel and allowing the energy of the pose to move through you.

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● Find your nearest ELEMIS counter at elemis.com/retail-spa-pods and either book in person or call 0117 318 1888, quoting *Top Santé*. Take this page along to your treatment.

T&Cs: One session per person. Allow 30 mins for both the SkinLab and Expert Touch treatment. Available on a first come, first served basis. Valid from 30 Sept to 30 Nov 2015.

Repair skin with cobnuts

Colder weather can often lead to chapped and irritated skin. Kentish Cobnut Oil Skin Repair Balm is made from cobnut oil, which is rich in vitamins E and B and easily absorbed. The balm puts moisture back into skin and helps reduce inflammation and redness. It's gentle enough to be used on your face, and the scent helps clear your airways. £16, kentishcobnuts.com.



NOURISH YOUR HAIR

More than an expensive delicacy, caviar is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, which nourish your hair follicles and help

hair grow quicker and stronger. Products containing omega-3 can also bring similar benefits as they mimic the scalp's natural oils. Try Noir Caviar's Anti-Age Restorative

Cleanser and Moisturiser, £13.50 each, and Restorative Styling Crème, £24.99, with black caviar extract, leave hair supple and shiny. For stockists, call 0845 643 4836.





BEST FACE FORWARD

Blustery winter weather can be a nightmare for sufferers of rosacea. Thankfully, there are plenty of ways to ensure skin looks calm and under control, says beauty writer Jocelyn Bailey.

MOST OF US GET rosy cheeks after a long walk on a blustery day. This sign of healthy blood flow is one we emulate during the rest of the year when we use blusher to give ourselves a healthy glow. But for some people, unwanted red cheeks occur all too frequently – after hot baths, saunas, alcohol or spicy food.

Worldwide, around one in 10 of us – nearly eight million people in the UK alone – have rosacea. Fortunately, many cases are mild, or at least begin that way, so many sufferers don't realise they have it and just accept that they have high colouring. Although there's no permanent cure, it can be controlled and tamed with a variety of helpful products and treatments.

Rosacea starts as a tendency to blush or flush easily, but progresses to a more lasting redness that looks like sunburn or a blush that doesn't fade, usually in the centre of the face. It may then gradually spread to the cheeks, forehead, nose and chin and can sometimes affect the eyes too, with conjunctivitis-like symptoms of wateriness, bloodshot whites, a dry gritty sensation and burning, itching or stinging. It features small, dilated blood vessels, known as telangiectasia, and/or tiny pimples/pustules that linger for weeks. The skin may feel itchy or experience a burning or stinging sensation. Although the pustules may resemble acne, which is why the condition has often been misdiagnosed as adult acne or acne rosacea, they aren't usually accompanied by the blackheads and whiteheads that occur in true acne.

The actual cause may be still be unknown, but the environmental and lifestyle factors that trigger flare-ups are usually easier to identify, although they vary from person to person. Common external triggers include changes in temperature, such as going from a warm room to the cold outdoors or vice versa, heat, especially from saunas, steam rooms and hot baths, and strenuous exercise. Another trigger can be UV light, which affects one third of



sufferers. It's not known why this is, but the NHS suggests it might activate peptide molecules in the skin that have an inflammatory, flushing effect, which could be the same mechanism by which spicy food and all the other triggers work. Other external irritants

include rubbing too hard when cleansing or exfoliating, and using irritating cosmetic ingredients, which can include glycolic acid and other acidic products, along with synthetic fragrances, alcohol, witch hazel and fragrant plants/essential oils such as cedar, cinnamon, lavender, lemon, lime, menthol, peppermint and pine.

Ingesting spicy foods, drinking alcohol or hot drinks, and even feeling stressed can also trigger redness. Hormone activity is another trigger, since rosacea can flare up at certain times of the month, during pregnancy or in relation to menopausal hot flushes.

CATCH IT EARLY

Although rosacea is a life-long condition, the redness and pimple flare-ups tend to come and go, especially at first. Many cases are very mild, but when normal colour doesn't return, or when pimples and enlarged blood vessels develop, see a dermatologist, as your skin may become trickier to treat.

WHO IS AFFECTED?

Rosacea affects three times as many women as men. It's more common in fair-skinned Celtic and Scandinavian skins, but can also occur in darker Asian and African complexions, too. It doesn't usually show during childhood and adolescence, except perhaps as a tendency to redden easily. Instead, onset occurs in adulthood, usually between the ages of 30 and 60. It has long been known to run in families and research at Stanford University has now identified a genetic link*. However, additional research suggests it could also be linked to underlying autoimmune conditions such as coeliac disease and diabetes.

'Recent research suggests that people with rosacea have greater skin sensitivity in general, including to different topical agents, such as glycolic acid, found in low doses in some chemical-based exfoliating products,' says consultant dermatologist Dr Nick Lowe of the Cranley Clinic in London. 'Another theory is that the skins of rosacea patients are more prone to the release of inflammatory chemicals that stimulate the blood vessels to enlarge and the skin to redden.'

The role of the demodex mite, which

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in most people lives harmlessly on the skin, is also a possible cause. It's tiny – 0.15-0.4mm in length – therefore invisible to the naked eye. According to studies, its prevalence varies between 23-100 per cent, with one study in North Carolina reporting that all over-18s carry it*. The mites are 15-18 times greater in number on the skin of rosacea patients than in healthy subjects, and there are various theories as to why this might be and whether they are a cause or an effect. Dr Erin Lesesky, assistant professor of dermatology at Duke University, conducted a meta-analysis of 48 studies and found a significant association between the relative density of demodex mites and the development of rosacea, suggesting the mites might be involved in the creation of the disease. However, Dr Lowe says scientists are unsure as to whether it's the mite itself, which is harmless in most people, that causes rosacea, or the type of bacteria it carries. 'The bacteria releases two proteins that trigger inflammation in rosacea patients, and scientists think this is why antibiotics and antibacterials can be so successful in treating it,' he says.

WHAT HELPS?

No known medicine can prevent or stop flushing, but there are lots of ways to reduce the condition, calm redness and minimise visible veins. Even severe cases can usually be controlled by a dermatologist, some even cleared up for good, although it may take a combination of treatments and several months. Mild cases can be helped by avoiding the factors that trigger the flare-ups, or at least by reducing exposure to them, as well as by using calming skincare products.

However, as Dr Mervyn Patterson of Woodford Medical in Essex points out: 'The problem is, trigger avoidance can be hard to do. Skincare is extremely important. Many patients will have tried different products before they reach us and will be wary, as many products are actually very irritating to them. But some can be highly successful.'

Fortunately, some lifestyle factors are pretty easy to adjust. For example, although you can't change the weather,

you can protect your face from the cold with a scarf or if you react to hot water, use cooler water temperatures for bathing/showering. Above all, when washing your face use tepid water and, when drying it, blot gently – don't rub.

Within your skincare routine, avoid anything abrasive, especially facial scrubs, washcloths, cleansing brushes and pads. It also makes sense to eliminate known irritants such as synthetic fragrances, essential oils including lavender, alcohol and witch hazel. It's also best to avoid normal over-the-counter acne creams, which

Dr Lowe says can be irritating to rosacea. Instead, choose soothing products containing antioxidants and repairing ingredients such as centella asiatica, ceramides, nicotinamide and vitamins A, C and E.

When it comes to treating rosacea from the inside, Dr Andrew Weil MD, who specialises in natural and preventative medicine, recommends following an anti-inflammatory diet of 7-9 portions of fruit and veg per day, healthy fats from olive oil, nuts, avocados and oily fish, plus the use of ginger and turmeric either in food or taken as supplements. He also suggests taking twice daily 500mg supplements containing gamma-linolenic acid such as evening primrose oil or blackcurrant oil. Finally, he advocates practicing stress reduction with the help of slow breathing techniques.

Sometimes, however, home measures aren't enough. 'Many people find the blushing and flushing and its unpredictable variability hard to cope with. For those whose jobs include facing the public, it is very debilitating,' says Dr Patterson.

Fortunately, professional help is available. 'First line treatments are agents that calm and soothe the skin and reduce inflammation,' explains Dr Lowe. 'Antibiotics are anti-inflammatory – the most frequently used are tetracycline and doxycycline, usually in small doses for three months, which may help the pustules. We might also use topical rub-on products such as metronidazole gel or cream. Recent US research supports topical azelaic acid as another helpful agent since it is both an antibacterial and anti-inflammatory antioxidant.'

'A low dose of roaccutane may suit more stubborn cases. It may be commonly known as an anti-acne treatment but in rosacea it also has an anti-inflammatory action. Cortisone creams are best avoided because they can make the condition worse. Although they seem to work at first by rapidly narrowing the blood vessels, there's a rebound enlargement later on.'

Dermatologists can also reduce enlarged blood vessels and treat reactive redness with intense pulsed light (IPL) therapy or with gentle facial lasers such as the Nd:YAG or pulsed dye laser. These work using high-intensity beams of light that convert to heat energy within the skin to shrink tiny ruptured blood vessels without harming surrounding tissues. However, they can recur. These treatments are not usually available on the NHS though,

TRY A NATURAL REMEDY

Use chamomile compresses, made by soaking 3-4 chamomile teabags in three cups of hot water for 10 minutes, chilling the brew in the fridge, then dipping cotton pads into it. You can also make a compress with chilled green tea. Always do a patch test first to check for sensitivity.

Is your skin hot and bothered?



Rosacea starts with flushing and persistent facial redness, which progresses to a lasting redness.



As pimples/pustules can occur, the condition is often mistaken for acne rosacea.



In adult acne (above), pustules are often accompanied by blackheads and whiteheads.



The demodex mite tends to live on the face and neck and is spread by physical contact.

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and can cost from around £100 per session depending on where you live and the area to be treated.

EMERGENCY COVER

Finally, regardless of whether your skin is having a major flare-up or minor flush, the easiest temporary help is make-up. To start with, a neutralising primer helps all colour go on more smoothly and last longer, as well as sometimes providing therapeutic benefits too. For example, Dermalogica's Redness Relief Primer SPF20, £38.50, contains a colour-neutralising green tint and UV-filters, and also calms irritation with helpful yeast and oat-based ingredients.

For an all-over base, mineral foundations are less likely to contain fragrance and other irritating ingredients, are easy to build-up and usually offer excellent SPF-protection. Another advantage is that they go on with a brush so there's less handling and rubbing of your skin. Try bareMinerals Original SPF15 Foundation, £26.

For small problem areas, a concealer may be enough. Skin Shop's new Conceal & Shield, available in five shades, £11.95, contains Teflose, a natural ingredient that calms redness and provides a 'teflon-like' antibacterial shield over blemishes and inflamed areas. It also contains biolin, a new skin prebiotic that drenches the area with healthy bacteria and helps repair the skin barrier.



Calming skincare products can help to reduce redness and minimise veins

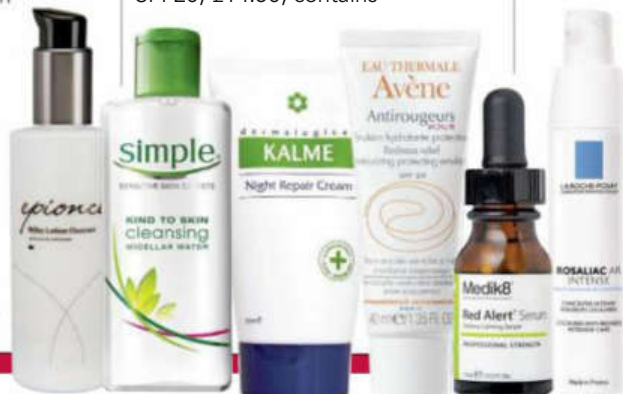
Your rosacea treatment plan

TO CLEANSE Epionce Milky Lotion Cleanser, £25.50, is calming for sensitive skin, rosacea and eczema, and gentle enough for eye make-up removal, thanks to reparative antioxidants and healing marshmallow. Alternatively, Simple Micellar Cleansing Water, £4.49, contains calming chamomile and niacinamide. It's most suited for days when you don't wear much make-up.

TO MOISTURISE At night, try Kalme Night Repair Cream, £19.95. It contains Derma Sensitive, a patented caper extract proven to reduce sensitivity and redness by 70 per cent. For daytime, Avene Eau Thermale Redness Relief Moisturizing Protecting Emulsion, SPF20, £14.50, contains

ruscus aculeatus (butcher's broom) to improve blood flow and tighten capillaries, plus calming thermal spring water and UV protection.

TO TREAT Medik8 Red Alert Serum, £30, uses pharmaceutical grade ingredients such as teprenone and vitamin K2 to strengthen capillary walls and reduce erythema (redness). La Roche-Posay Rosaliac AR Intense, £17, calms and inhibits redness with ambophenol, an antioxidant vegetable extract that constricts blood vessels and strengthens their walls.





BEAUTY *essentials*

Winter is the perfect time to harness the physical and psychological benefits of essential oils. We discover six that will not only brighten your mood, but your skin and hair too!



WHO KNEW A little bottle of natural plant essence could deliver so much? While essential oils have been used for centuries for health reasons, science is finally beginning to recognise their benefits not only for health but beauty too. For example, they can be applied to your skin to diminish wrinkles, improve tone and brighten, and used on your hair to strengthen follicles and prevent thinning. The cold winter weather outside and central heating indoors can deplete your natural bodily oils, leaving skin dry and flaky and hair frazzled, but essential oils will nourish and boost your health.

The invigorating and revitalising scent of botanical essences can also give you a powerful mood lift, which is especially important now that daylight hours are diminishing.

HOW DO ESSENTIAL OILS WORK?

Essential oils are concentrated essences of plants or fruits, extracted by steam distillation or mechanical compression. 'Essential oils are found in the leaves, flowers, fruit, wood and roots of aromatic plants,' explains Jennie Harding, an essential oil expert and tutor at the Tisserand Institute, a research and educational centre for the study of aromatherapy. 'If you smell a rose or run your hand over a rosemary bush, the fragrance you can detect is the essential oil inside.'

'You have approximately 350 odorant receptors in the roof of your nose that detect scent,' explains Tim Jacob, an expert on the science of smell at Cardiff University. 'Each smell activates a unique pattern of olfactory receptors. This is the smell's signature – a bit like a three-dimensional barcode. Smell information is first sent to a region of the brain called the limbic system, which is situated beneath the cerebral cortex and deals with emotion and memory. The scent information then arrives in the higher cortical brain regions for perception and interpretation. This is why smell and memory are very closely linked and you can associate a scent with a particular person, event or place.'

The following six essential oils are best suited to boosting your mood, as well as looking after your skin and hair this winter.



BERGAMOT

This fresh, invigorating scent is a known antidepressant.

Bergamot essential oil is extracted from the rind of an orange-lemon hybrid fruit called citrus bergamia. It's thought to take its name from Bergamo in Italy where the fruit is widely cultivated. The popular black breakfast tea Earl Grey is scented with bergamot essential oil. Bergamot is also a key ingredient of many luxury perfumes, including Chanel N°5 and Opium by Yves Saint Laurent.

AS A MOOD BOOSTER

A study in February 2015 by the Department of Immunology at Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine, Japan, found bergamot had a positive effect on mood by banishing negative emotions and fatigue. Researchers asked 41 women to inhale the vapours of the essential oil for 15 minutes, then measured the cortisol levels in their saliva, as well as asking them to complete a questionnaire on their mood. Cortisol is the hormone released in response to fear or anxiety. Those who had inhaled the bergamot vapours had significantly lower saliva cortisol levels, as well as lower scores for negative emotions and fatigue, compared to when they inhaled water vapours or just rested.

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BEAUTY BENEFITS

Blemishes Widely added to skin care products, bergamot has skin healing properties that help to fade blemish marks and scars. It is also

Antibacterial, antifungal and antiseptic, bergamot oil helps to fade scars and fight acne.

said to help diminish sun spots on the face. Add a drop of bergamot to your

regular moisturiser for a smoother, more even skin tone. 'Bergamot will balance oily and troubled skin,' says Jennie. 'Add two drops to 10ml of grape seed oil for a skin purifying blend.' Rub a small amount on oily or blemished areas and allow to sink into your skin at night. Its antiseptic properties

will help to speed up the healing of eczema and acne.

Deodorant Bergamot is a natural disinfectant so prevents the growth of bacteria that causes body odour. Add 17 drops to 100ml of water and spray under arms. Or, add 4 tbsp of baking soda to the mixture to make it more absorbent then apply with your fingers.

TRY Aqua Oleum Bergamot essential oil, £6.50, aqua-oleum.co.uk, or Tisserand organic bergamot essential oil (right), £7.85, tisserand.com.



GRAPEFRUIT

This zingy citrus fruit helps to ease fatigue.

Also known as citrus paradisi, grapefruit originates from Barbados and Jamaica. The essential oil is extracted by compressing the peel.

AS A MOOD BOOSTER

A study published last year by the Institute for Protein Research, Osaka University, Japan, confirmed that grapefruit essential oil acts as a stimulant to the sympathetic nervous system, giving you a feeling of alertness and wellbeing*. Make a mood-brightening grapefruit essential oil room or body spray by adding a couple of drops of the oil to water inside an atomiser spray bottle. It's also a powerful airborne antiseptic so will keep you clean and free from bacteria.

BEAUTY BENEFITS

Detoxing Grapefruit essential oil is a valuable detox aid to combat cellulite,* says Julia Lawless, a scent expert from aromatherapy company Aqua Oleum. Dilute a couple of drops in a carrier oil and massage it onto cellulite-prone areas, such as the backs of your thighs and buttocks.

Decongesting Grapefruit is an astringent, so it will deep cleanse your hair, stripping away the dulling residue of styling products to reveal shiny, lustrous locks. Add two drops to your shampoo to decongest your scalp, cleanse hair follicles and get rid of dandruff. Or, mix two drops with a carrier oil, such as jojoba, and massage

into your hair to remove any product build-up. Leave for five minutes then shampoo as normal.

Antioxidant Rich in vitamin C, this essential oil supercharges skin and hair with vitality by protecting them from oxidation and toxins that lead to ageing and degeneration of cells. Mix one drop into 10ml of aloe vera gel for a vitamin-packed face mask. Leave on for 10 minutes, then rinse off, avoiding your eye area.

TRY Tisserand organic grapefruit essential oil (right), £6.15, tisserand.com, or Aqua Oleum grapefruit essential oil, £4.25, aqua-oleum.co.uk.



MANDARIN

This sweet citrus aroma is uplifting and cheering.

An energising oil, from the peel of the citrus reticulata, mandarin is native to China where it is a traditional symbol of good fortune.

AS A MOOD BOOSTER

Add mandarin to water on top of an oil burner and leave it in your living room for an uplifting scent that creates a feeling of positivity.

BEAUTY BENEFITS

Anti-ageing A study in the *Journal of American Science* found that mandarin essential oil may help prevent ageing because it promotes

Increase
circulation to
decrease cellulite
with grapefruit
essential oil

ROSEMARY

Oil from this culinary herb
sharpens the senses.

Part of the mint family, which includes basil, lavender and sage, rosemary is best known as a partner to roast lamb. Its essential oil, *rosmarinus officinalis*, is extracted from the leaves of the bush.

AS A MOOD BOOSTER

Improve memory and boost brain power with rosemary essential oil. 'This powerful stimulant can help clear the mind,' says Julia. 'It is particularly beneficial if you need to concentrate and be alert.'

A study in the *International Journal of Neuroscience* found that 144 people who inhaled rosemary essential oil displayed significantly improved cognitive function as well as improved mood, over those in fragrance-free rooms*.

BEAUTY BENEFITS

Hair care Rosemary oil can make hair grow longer and stronger, as well as slowing premature hair loss. 'Rosemary stimulates micro-circulation, which encourages blood flow to your hair follicles,' says Michelle Power, spokesperson for holistic beauty company Neal's Yard Remedies. 'When diluted and applied to the scalp it boosts healthy hair growth.'

In a study published in the *SKINmed Journal* this year, rosemary essential oil performed as well as the medically approved hair loss treatment, minoxidil, with both test groups experiencing significant increase in hair growth after six months of twice-daily treatment. The group using rosemary oil experienced less scalp itching – a side effect of minoxidil – than those using the pharmaceutical.

Anti-ageing A study by the Department of Oral Physiology, Meikai University School of Dentistry, Japan, found inhaling



rosemary essential oil for five minutes decreased cortisol levels in 22 healthy volunteers*.

Cortisol is a stress response hormone

that can age the body if too much is secreted over an extended period of time. To decrease stress and feel uplifted, mix 3-5 drops of rosemary with a shot glass measure of tap water, and heat the liquid in a ceramic oil burner for an hour. Keep checking whether the water has evaporated

– add more and another drop of essential oil to top up if needed.

Rosemary oil
can thicken
hair, reduce
stress and
improve
alertness.

the growth of new cells*. It is an antioxidant and is also thought to improve blood circulation, keeping your skin rejuvenated by encouraging new cells to grow. For a cleansing and purifying tonic that will tone and brighten oily or combination skin, add two drops of essential oil to 10ml carrier oil and massage onto your face, avoiding the eye and mouth area.

TRY Aqua Oleum
mandarin essential oil,
£4.95, aqua-oleum.co.uk, or Tisserand organic
mandarin essential oil,
£9.66, tisserand.com.



TRY Tisserand
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essential oil, £6.05,
from tisserand.com,
or Aqua Oleum
rosemary essential
oil (right), £4.25,
from aqua-oleum.co.uk.



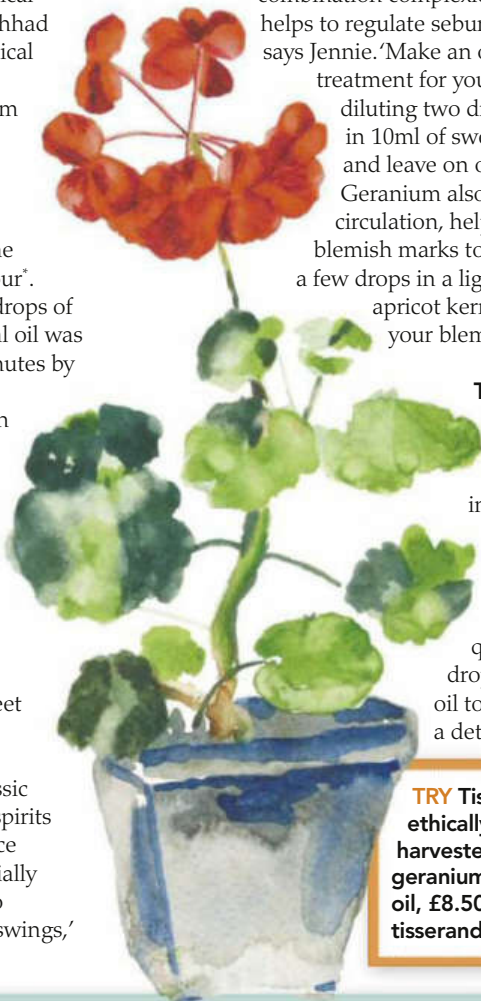
GERANIUM

This uplifting scent is traditionally used to banish anxiety.

Geranium is an attractive five-petalled flower with more than 200 varieties, but it's the pelargonium graveolens, native to the French Island of Réunion and to South Africa, which is considered to produce the best quality essential oil. The oil is extracted by steam distillation of its stem and leaves.

AS A MOOD BOOSTER

A recent study by North Khorasan University of Medical Sciences and Mashhad University of Medical Sciences found breathing geranium essential oil significantly reduced anxiety levels in first-time mothers during the early stage of labour*. The scent of two drops of geranium essential oil was inhaled for 20 minutes by 50 women, while another 50 women at the same dilation were given a placebo. Those inhaling geranium oil had lower blood pressure and decreased anxiety levels. 'The rosy and delicately sweet scent of geranium essential oil is an aromatherapy classic that will lift your spirits and help to balance your mood, especially if you are prone to occasional mood swings,' says Jennie.



BEAUTY BENEFITS

Anti-ageing An ideal oil for mature skin, geranium rejuvenates facial skin cells, creating a glowing complexion and fighting signs of ageing. This is because it has cytophylactic properties, meaning it protects cells from degrading. It also has astringent properties, which help tone and tighten skin, thereby reducing the appearance of wrinkles on your face. Simply add a drop to your regular night cream.

Blemishes Geranium oil is anti-bacterial, so it's effective at healing acne and minor cuts. 'It is also an excellent tonic for all skin types but especially for combination complexions because it helps to regulate sebum production,' says Jennie. 'Make an oil-balancing treatment for your skin by diluting two drops of geranium in 10ml of sweet almond oil and leave on overnight.' Geranium also improves blood circulation, helping scars and blemish marks to fade. Dilute a few drops in a light oil, such as apricot kernel, and dab onto your blemish.

Toxin eliminator

Geranium is a diuretic, meaning it can increase urination. This helps you eliminate toxins, such as airborne pollutants, more quickly. Add 12 drops of geranium oil to a warm bath for a detoxing soak.

TRY Tisserand ethically harvested geranium essential oil, £8.50, tisserand.com.



Handle with care

Consult your doctor before using aromatherapy remedies, especially if you take prescription medication, or suffer from a medical condition. Avoid essential oils if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, and do not ingest them. Some oils may cause skin irritation if you have sensitive skin. Perform a patch test before use by placing a diluted drop on your inner elbow. Leave for at least an hour. If irritation or redness occurs, wash the area with olive oil, then with cold water and do not use again.

● **Bergamot** and **mandarin** can increase your sensitivity to sunlight, so don't apply to skin during the day – save it for a night treatment. Store the oil in a dark bottle out of sunlight.

● **Geranium** is considered a gentle oil but always do a patch test for sensitivity before using.

● Eating **grapefruit** or drinking grapefruit juice can interact with medications, including statins. This is not thought to apply to the essential oil but check with a medical professional before using if you have any concerns. It may also induce photosensitivity so avoid using it in sunlight.

● Before using **rosemary** on your skin or hair perform a patch test, as it may cause allergic reactions. Avoid this essential oil if you have epilepsy, high blood pressure or are pregnant.

CARRY THESE HOME

Essential oils are extremely concentrated. Never apply them directly to your skin. Instead, dilute them with a nourishing carrier oil. Use two or three drops of essential

oil per 10ml of carrier oil. Julia Lawless of Aqua Oleum recommends jojoba carrier oil, £10.74. 'It is absorbed easily and is extremely nourishing for skin and hair due to its similarity to your skin's natural oils. It is a liquid wax rather than a vegetable oil, so it doesn't deteriorate over time, which is

important if you are storing mixed blends.' A scientific review found jojoba oil has an anti-inflammatory effect on the skin, making it useful for anti-ageing treatments and to heal acne*. Alternatively, try apricot kernel carrier oil, £3.50, which contains high levels of nourishing fatty acids and antioxidants.

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BEAUTY TOOLKIT

THE DIY SPA FACIAL

Treat your skin to a post-spa glow, and prevent winter dryness from the comfort of your own home with our guide to the perfect facial.

Deep cleanse

Use a clay mask to draw out impurities and minimise pores, especially if you're prone to blackheads. Kiehl's Rare Earth Pore Cleansing Masque, £21.50, contains Amazonian white clay and oatmeal to loosen surface dirt. If your skin is dry, only apply it to your T-zone.

Seal in moisture

Apply an antioxidant-packed serum. If you're worried about product overload, pick a water-based, fast-absorbing formulation such as Antipodes Worship Superfruit Antioxidant Serum, £33.99. It includes açai berry extract and essential fatty acid alpha-lipoic acid (ALA) to protect against free radicals.

Add in a relaxation ritual

The Ila Orange Blossom Candle for Higher Energy, £40, is non-toxic and made with all-natural ingredients including beeswax, jojoba oil and essential oil of neroli. It has an uplifting aroma, and the cooled melted wax is nourishing when massaged into hands and feet.

Massage facial muscles

Encourage detoxification and lymphatic drainage with Darphin 8-Flower Nectar Oil Cream, £65, which is a hybrid product that switches from cream to emollient oil as you smooth it onto your skin. Massage in a figure of eight motion, always moving upwards and outwards to encourage drainage.

Slough away dead skin

Exfoliating dead cells speeds up your skin's renewal process and makes it easier for products to penetrate your skin. The Body Shop Aloe Gentle Exfoliator, £11, will smooth without irritating sensitive complexions. The organic aloe vera gathers together any flaking cells so they are removed easily, while also softening skin.

Dress your face

Once thoroughly cleansed and decongested, your skin is more receptive to a sheet mask drenched with active ingredients. Sarah Chapman Skinesis 3D Moisture Infusion Masks, £39 for four, are infused with hyaluronic acid and rosewater to plump complexions and boost moisture retention.

Get some beauty sleep

Korres Wild Rose Advanced Repair Sleeping Facial, £26, hydrates and brightens while you sleep. The overnight facial is boosted with wild rose oil, vitamin C, beeswax, jojoba oil, aloe and hyaluronic acid for softer, smoother, more radiant skin by morning.



SPOTLIGHT
ON...

strobing HIGHLIGHTS

Define and lift your features with illuminators that add radiance in seconds.

EVEN IN WINTER you can achieve a lit-from-within glow, with very little effort.

Strobing, where you strategically place highlights for luminosity, is this season's beauty buzzword, although a version of this first originated in the 1930s, when Max Factor used it to enhance television make-up. Think of strobing as the antithesis of contouring, which involves creating shadows for definition. Instead, you're looking to make a subtle, flattering shift.

'Strobing creates a healthy glow, and is very easy to achieve using just one product and your fingers,' explains Florrie White, Clinique's UK colour artist. 'Focus on the high points of your face, such as cheek bones, temples, Cupid's bow and the inner corners of your eyes.'

A well-placed gleam of light-reflecting highlighter can camouflage dullness, bring out your bone structure and soften the look of fine lines to produce a youthful look. The effect should be ethereal glow rather than sun-kissed shimmer.

FIND YOUR IDEAL STROBER

Choose a slightly lighter or brighter shade than you might normally use to brighten your skin's natural undertones. 'Make sure the product enhances your skin tone so that it illuminates the skin, rather than looking obvious,' Florrie advises. Pink-toned complexions should choose pearlescent, white-based highlighters, while warmer skins suit peachier, rose-gold tones.

As strobing bathes your skin with extra radiance, it also transforms more mature, sallow complexions. Florrie recommends a cream or liquid formulation for mature and dry skins, and powders for oilier types. 'Cream products melt effortlessly onto the skin whereas a powder can get caught in any fine lines.' Avoid finely milled glitter frosting – strobing should add just a hint of opalescence.

4 STEPS TO DEFINITION & RADIANCE

1 Create a smooth base.

Hydration is key to strobing, says Justine Jenkins, celebrity make-up artist. 'Start with a vitamin-packed moisturiser and use an illuminating base,' she advises. If you'd rather go base-free, first use a primer to smooth your skin and buff in concealer where needed.

2 Spot highlight.

For optimum strobing, highlight areas that light would naturally hit – tops of cheekbones, temples, forehead, brow bone, Cupid's bow and down the centre

of your nose. 'You're looking for shimmer to gently catch the light, not sparkle,' says Justine.

3 Use a light hand.

Apply your highlighter sparingly using the delicate touch of your ring finger. Build up the product gradually by patting on gently. Too much will result in a futuristic, mirrored effect. If you want more impact, apply a highlighting powder over a highlighting cream.

4 Finish with a powder.

Maintain your candlelit effect with a super-fine finishing powder that won't clog or stick to your make-up. 'You just need a light dusting to absorb any shine where you don't want it,' says Justine. Apply using a full-face brush with soft bristles.

TRIED & TESTED



LISA DOLATOWSKI, 36, GLENROTHES, FIFE, TRIED BECCA SHIMMERING SKIN PERFECTOR PRESSED IN MOONSTONE, £30.

THE LOW-DOWN:

This pressed powder has a soft and creamy texture thanks to liquid binders. Highly pigmented, ultra-fine luminescent pearls adjust to skin's natural undertones and reflect light. It's available in five pearly shades.

THE VERDICT:

I prefer a natural make-up look and this was just the right colour for a realistic glow. It goes on smooth and even if you apply lightly. It made my skin look much brighter and healthier.



SPLURGE



KELLY MYERS, 34, SHEFFIELD, TRIED BENEFIT HIGH BEAM LUMINESCENT COMPLEXION ENHANCER, £19.50.

THE LOWDOWN:

The pearlescent pink liquid dries quickly and can be used to spot highlight specific areas or mixed with your foundation for an all-over glow. Use the brush, or dab on with a fingertip for more application control.

THE VERDICT: I have quite dry skin so a liquid formulation like High Beam is perfect. The colour is pearly and bright and you only need a small drop to create instant definition on bone structure. The brush applicator makes it easy to dab on.



MID-RANGE



DEE HAYDEN, 45, READING, BERKS, TRIED ZAO LIGHT TOUCH COMPLEXION IN PINKY 721, £14.50.

THE LOW-DOWN:

A natural highlighter that contains microparticles of pure silver and organic sweet almond oil to illuminate the skin. Apply directly from the bamboo applicator using a finger or natural rubber sponge.

THE VERDICT: The consistency of the highlighter was a little gloopy but it blended easily onto my face. I used it on my cheekbones and it definitely had a lifting and illuminating effect.



BUDGET

Free for YOU!

Get happy with our fantastic mood-boosting giveaways. We've got more than £1,800 worth of prizes up for grabs this month!

Worth
£1,000



SEVEN-NIGHT COASTAL BREAK IN BEAUTIFUL TURKEY

Lift your spirits with a week's stay in a luxurious villa in Alanya on the Turkish coast with our fantastic healthy holiday giveaway.

The seven-night stay is for two people, courtesy of 5 Star Villa Holidays, and includes two return flights from London Gatwick or Leeds Bradford, provided by Monarch Airlines.

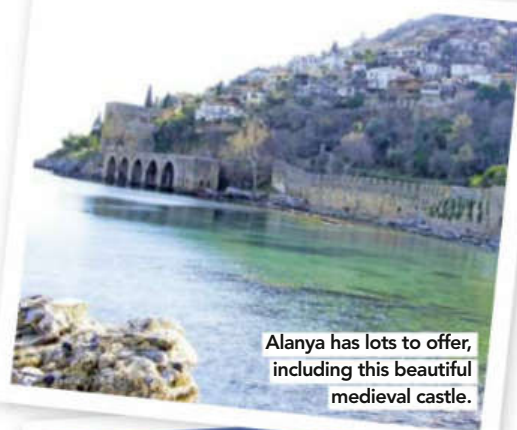
While away the days sunbathing on endless sandy beaches just a 10-minute drive from your villa, or relax and unwind by experiencing a traditional Turkish hammam in the nearby Kleopatra Turkish Bath. If you fancy being more active, Alanya is ideal for paragliding, white water rafting and sailing.

The villa has four double bedrooms, including a master bedroom, so you can invite family, with a Jacuzzi and access to the terrace overlooking the harbour.

It has its own tennis courts if you're feeling energetic enough for a game, after which you can cool down with a refreshing dip in your private pool. The villa also has a vegetable garden where you can pick fresh tomatoes and peppers for your lunch, and an orange and lemon tree garden where you can take a stroll.

The prize can be taken in May, June, September or October 2016.

5 Star Villa Holidays are also offering all *Top Santé* readers 10 per cent off villa stays in over 700 locations including Turkey, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Spain and the USA. Quote *Santé* when booking by 31 October 2015. Visit 5starvillaholidays.com or call 0151 494 9145.



Alanya has lots to offer, including this beautiful medieval castle.



Worth
£200

2 x Slumberdown Sleepwell Wonderful Wool duvet and pillow sets

What could be more inviting than diving under the duvet on a cold autumn night? Snuggle up in luxury with this duvet and pillow set worth up to £100. Made with pure wool and 233 thread count cotton, it will keep you warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Choose from single, double or king-size. For more information visit slumberdown.co.uk.

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Worth
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1 x hamper of Bodhi & Birch spa products and Yushoi Snapea rice sticks

This is the perfect prize for a pampering night in. First enjoy the spicy scent of Bodhi & Birch Siam Ginger Vitalising Bath & Shower Therapy, then revitalise and exfoliate with the Rosemary Chi Himalayan Detox Salt Scrub. Finally, smooth on the Neroli Lucé Revitalising

Worth
£150

Face Oil. Feeling good? The prize also includes a selection of Yushoi Snapea rice sticks in various flavours. For more information, visit bodhiandbirch.com and yushoi.co.uk.

Worth
£260

1 x Aromaworks skincare set

Release the stresses of the day and discover your inner calm with this fantastic prize from skincare and home fragrance specialist Aromaworks. One lucky reader will receive a Rejuvenate Face Serum Oil, Absolute Eye Serum, Absolute Face Serum, Day Cream, Night Cream and Nurture Body Oil, which includes may chang and sandalwood to help you relax.

All products are made with 100 per cent natural ingredients. Find out more at aroma-works.com.

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- 3 Fill in your email address and click on 'Enter This Competition'. The closing date is 4 November 2015.

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ASK THE EXPERTS

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YOGA EXPERT

Heather Langley helps you build confidence, feel energised and combat stress.

Q Are there any yoga poses that could help improve my confidence? *Callie, 36*

A When you lack confidence it is often reflected in your posture – chest hollowed, head bowed and shoulders pull forward. A poorly aligned spine and torso affects your energy levels, as the muscles struggle to carry the collapsed weight. When your energy level is low due to dealing with poor posture, this can affect how you feel, further fuelling your lack of confidence.

Any postures that encourage an upright spine or open the chest are great for increasing confidence, such as *tadasana*, also known as mountain pose. This is traditionally used as an alignment reference for all standing poses. Stand with your feet hip width apart, pushing your sacrum gently down towards your heels to lengthen your lumbar spine. You should also feel your lower abdominal muscles engage.

You're now ready to go into podium pose, also known as *Utthita Hastasana*. Feel the front of your torso lift and lengthen. Draw your shoulder blades down towards your heels. Next, extend your arms above your head, palms facing each other but not together, keeping your shoulder blades fixed. Lift your chin without compressing the back of your neck.

Podium pose helps to strengthen your core muscles, namely your abdominals, *psoas*, which runs from the thigh bone through the length of the belly, and *gluteals*. When our core muscles are strong we feel strong, and if we feel strong, we are more able to cope with whatever life throws at us, making us feel more confident.



Practice *ujjayi* breathing anytime you need an energy boost.

Q My energy levels drop in autumn. How can yoga help me feel energised? *Lana, 54*

A In autumn, the natural world is entering its resting phase so it is normal for you to feel a drop in energy. In the Dynamic Yoga breathing technique known as *ujjayi*, or 'harnessing energy', you can generate or 'harvest' energy to help you feel more vibrant when

flagging. Start by sitting comfortably with a naturally upright spine. Lengthen the back of your neck and draw the underside of your chin closer to the base of your throat. Place your tongue on the top of your palate so it's closing the gap at the back of your throat – this



Q I suffer from depression. What are the best types of yoga for releasing feel-good endorphins? *Faye, 43*

A Yin yoga is a calming and therapeutic style of yoga. It can be quite an emotional process, and your body may release endorphins to reduce any pain felt physically or mentally.

The classic Sun Salutation sequence is an ideal practice first thing in the morning, as it is energising and stimulating both physically and mentally. The sequence involves alternating between forward and backward bending postures, known to stimulate the central nervous system, which is responsible for the release of endorphins.

It is best to learn this sequence under the guidance of a qualified yoga instructor. However, if you are practising at home it is important to be aware of the correct alignment in each posture along with the placing, spacing and spreading of hands and fingers throughout the sequence.

allows you to take longer, slower breaths. Try not to clench your jaw muscles. Breathe only through your nostrils. Draw your breath in smoothly as far down into your lungs as possible, keeping your shoulder blades down. Breathe out with your tongue in the same position. You should be able to hear your breath. After around five complete breaths, you may start to feel the warmth generated by molecular compression of the air converted into heat spreading through your body.

LIFE COACH

Camilla Sacre-Dallerup
advises you on communication
and body language skills.



Q I'm a nervous speaker and avoid situations where I need to talk to strangers. What can I do to stop isolating myself? *Denise, 39*



A You can change this habit as easily as you created it, simply by reframing the situation and swapping the stressful habit for a positive one. Make a circle in the middle of a piece of paper. Inside the circle write, 'me in any situation where I need to speak to others'. Draw lines radiating out from the circle and at the end of each one, write how it makes you feel when you are in this situation. For example, anxious, annoyed, sad, isolated, alone and so on. Take a good look at what you have written and ask yourself, 'am I ready to let this go?'. If the answer is yes, rip up the piece of paper and throw it away. Grab another sheet and write, 'me in situations where I talk to other people'. Draw lines again, this time writing how you want to feel when in this scenario: confident, happy, relaxed, proud and so on. Take a look at what you have written down. Notice how you feel about the scenario now, and consider how it will feel in the future once you have successfully mastered that situation. By reframing things, you will feel more confident next time you're in a social setting.

Q How can I stop talking about myself so much in conversations? *Ann, 59*

A When we are making conversation, it's natural that we relate to situations in our own lives. It's OK to find common ground with the other person, as long as you let them finish their sentences too.

The key to any good conversation is to listen with an open and calm mind, not while frantically thinking about what you are going to say next. Instead of relating back to yourself every time, ask the other person some questions relevant to the conversation. This shows you are genuinely listening and interested in what they are saying.

Speaking about yourself can also be a nervous reaction. Try slowing your

breathing down. As you breathe deeper, your thoughts will slow down too. This will give you space between your thoughts, and you will find it easier to listen to others without always jumping in.



Taking deep breaths in new social situations will help to calm your nerves and allow you to enjoy listening to others.



ORAL HEALTH EXPERT

Dr Nigel Carter advises on mouthwash, brushing and the effects of smoking.

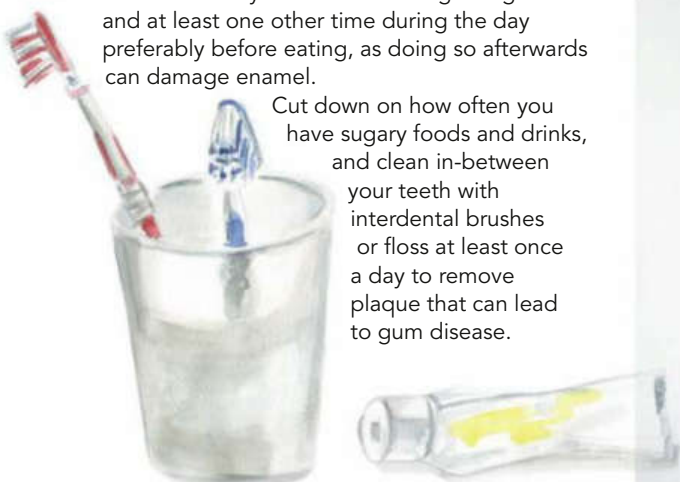
Q I used to smoke. How can I ensure my mouth is healthy?
Annette, 58

A The first thing you need to do is visit your dentist for a full examination. People who smoke are more likely to produce bacterial plaque, which leads to gum disease. The gums are affected because smoking causes a lack of oxygen in the bloodstream, so the infected gums don't heal. Ask your dentist to check for symptoms.

One of the major effects of smoking is staining on the teeth due to the nicotine and tar in tobacco. There are several 'whitening' toothpastes on the market and although these do not affect the natural colour of your teeth, they may be effective at removing staining, and therefore improve the overall appearance of your teeth. You could also opt for tooth-whitening procedures. The best way to find a legal and safe procedure is to contact your dental practice, which will either be able to carry out the whitening or refer you to a qualified professional in your area. Shop-bought products are not usually strong enough to offer a dramatic shade change due to the low percentage of hydrogen peroxide (0.1 per cent) in them. Dentists are able to use a higher level due to their professional status.

Smoking is also one of the main causes of mouth cancer. Every year, thousands of people die from mouth cancer brought on by smoking. As well as getting a comprehensive check-up, it is important you maintain a good oral health routine. Brush your teeth last thing at night and at least one other time during the day preferably before eating, as doing so afterwards can damage enamel.

Cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks, and clean in-between your teeth with interdental brushes or floss at least once a day to remove plaque that can lead to gum disease.



Brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day, and clean between your teeth with floss to remove plaque build-up



Q I drink hot water with lemon in the morning. Should I brush my teeth before or afterwards? *Janette, 56*

A A glass of hot water and lemon in the morning is said to have many health benefits including cleansing your system and stimulating digestive enzymes. However, every time you eat or drink anything with a pH value lower than 5.5, such as a citrus fruits, the enamel on your teeth becomes softer for a short while and loses some of its mineral content. If you brush your teeth during this time, you brush away small bits of enamel. Over time, you can end up exposing the underlying dentin, which is yellower in colour than enamel and may lead to painful sensitivity. Your saliva will slowly cancel out the acidity in your mouth and get it back to its natural



balance, but it can take hours.

Wait one hour before brushing to allow your mouth to return to its natural acidity level and your teeth to build up their mineral content. Use a soft toothbrush and don't brush too aggressively. Use fluoride toothpaste, as this will help to remineralise your teeth and prevent dental erosion and decay.

You can further minimise the risk by drinking through a straw so the drink bypasses your teeth. Also, chewing sugar-free gum after drinking the lemon water helps you produce more saliva to neutralise the acidity in your mouth.

Q I have been treated for an HPV-related condition. Does this increase my risk of mouth cancer? *Grace, 47*

A There is a link between human papillomavirus (HPV) and mouth cancer with many experts believing HPV will overtake tobacco as the main cause of mouth cancer within the next decade. However, it is worth knowing the facts so you don't panic.

HPV is a virus that affects the moist membranes lining our bodies. It can cause abnormal tissue growth and other changes to cells that may lead to cancer.

The HPV virus is spread skin-to-skin, with unprotected oral sex being the most common way to develop it within the mouth. Most sexually active people will contract HPV at some point in their lives, but 90 per cent of infections go away by themselves within two years and don't affect the health of most people.

In some cases though, HPV infections can persist and may cause a variety of problems, the worst of which is mouth cancer. The key things you should look out for are ulcers that don't heal within three weeks, red and white patches in your mouth and any unusual lumps or swellings in the mouth or head and neck area.

Mouth cancer is often not caught early enough but, if it is, the chances of survival are nine out of ten, so early detection is important. Visit your dentist for a full oral health examination if you have concerns.



When used as part of a good oral health routine, mouthwash can help prevent gum disease.

Q I've heard conflicting advice about mouthwash. Should I use it or not? *Susie, 34*

A Mouthwash can be a very helpful aid in keeping your mouth clean and healthy as it contains fluoride that can help to reduce cavities and gum disease.

Mouthwashes that are antibacterial can help to prevent the build-up of plaque, which forms between your teeth and along the gum line. Every time you eat or drink something that contains sugar, the bacteria in plaque react with it, forming acids that can cause dental decay. Over time, these acids soften and dissolve the enamel on your teeth. When used along with brushing and interdental cleaning, mouthwash can help to prevent dental decay and gum disease. Using a fluoride mouthwash at a separate time, such as after lunch when tooth brushing is not convenient, will help to protect and strengthen tooth enamel.

Mouthwash can also be effective in fighting bad breath by killing bacteria. However, you should talk to your dentist about long-term bad breath to try to find the underlying cause.

SKIN EXPERT

Dr Rachael Eckel advises on youth-boosting techniques, adult acne and winter skin protection.



Exfoliating helps to clean pollutants from your pores and improve irregular texture.

Q My skin looks really dull. How can I get my youthful glow back? *Jodie, 41*

A The outermost layer of your skin is constantly generating new cells. Over a period of six weeks, these mature upwards to the surface before flaking off. Nearer their origin, these cells are full of water, but as they rise they dehydrate and wilt. When light hits cells replete with water, it reflects and causes the skin to glow. If there are a large number of dead, desiccated cells on the surface, skin will instead appear dull and rough. In youth, there is only a small layer of superficial dead cells. But from the age of 25, cellular turnover slows and lustreless cells accumulate.

To lift dead cells and restore healthy skin renewal, exfoliation is critical. This can be mild in the form of a daily mineral scrub, used

for 40-60 seconds at a time. The edges of the particles in the scrub should be finely polished so as not to cause microtears and irritation. For sensitive or more mature skin of 50-plus years, this may be reduced to twice weekly. As a moderate approach, a topical chemical exfoliant such as ZO Medical Glycogent, £40, with 10 per cent lactic and glycolic acid may be supplemented daily. Occasional peels with salicylic acid or trichloroacetic acid performed by a medical professional can be used in adjunct for a more dramatic result. Moisturisers should be avoided as they hinder exfoliation and lead to an accumulation of dead, lacklustre cells on the surface.

Q The skin around my nose and cheeks becomes irritated and flaky in autumn. How can I prevent this? *Emma, 38*

A One of the skin's primary functions is to act as barrier or shield. This enables protection from your surroundings. When disrupted, water evaporates, leading to dryness, and allergens penetrate, causing irritation and itching.

The changes you describe suggest weakness and intolerance due to a damaged barrier function. Several elements can contribute to this including sun, pollution, climate change, disease and incorrect product use (e.g. cosmetic moisturisers). Correcting it requires exfoliation twice weekly and daily replacement of key water, lipid and protein elements with a product such as ZO Daily Power Defense, £86. Always choose products with physiologically relevant lipid components such as ceramides, squalene, cholesterol and triglycerides instead of whole oils (those that are in their complete state such as evening primrose), which clog pores, promote dullness, worsen sensitivity and fail to penetrate skin. Daily UV protection is also crucial for barrier function, irrespective of geographic location or season. Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF value of 30 or greater. Comprehensive formulations that contain physical blocks, antioxidants, DNA repair enzymes and fractionated melanin provide maximal protection using cutting edge science.



RELATIONSHIP EXPERT

Sara Davison
on putting the
spark back into
a marriage
and dealing
with in-laws.



Q My husband has been suffering from a serious illness for the past six months and I feel like more of a carer than a wife. How can I reignite our spark? *Sam, 52*

A In situations like this we often have to alter our role in the relationship. You have shifted your identity for a while to help your husband through a tough time. The good news is it is possible to shift it back by following a few key steps.

Create a safe environment to have a calm and honest discussion with your husband about what you would like to achieve. Good communication about how you feel and hearing his thoughts is important to making this work.

Identify what you would like to stop doing and what you want to start doing or reintroduce. This may be allowing your husband to become more independent again or even organising a date night every week. Ask for his suggestions too, as you may find this is something you both want to happen.

Make sure you have fun together and schedule in some things that you both enjoy doing as a couple to rebuild your bond.

Nothing has to happen overnight, so put a plan in place to slowly move back into your wife role and away from being seen as a carer. This may take a few weeks or months and is better to be taken one step at a time.



A simple walk can help relieve tension and keep the peace between family members.

Q My husband and son-in-law are very argumentative and competitive, making family gatherings uncomfortable. How can I ease the tension? *Gail, 48*

A Your husband and son-in-law may not be aware of the tension they are causing. If they are approachable about the subject, broach it with them individually. Don't blame either one of them, but mention you have noticed that things can get competitive and that it can put a strain on the rest of the family members present. Ask them gently to be aware of this, as you want to make sure everyone is relaxed and enjoying their time together. Sometimes explaining how their behaviour can make others feel may be all it takes.

If you can't speak to them about it or you don't think it will help, then enlist

the help of another family member to help you ensure things don't escalate. With two of you working together it will lessen the pressure on you and give you more options.

Do a seating plan for family meal times to ensure they are kept apart. If tensions do start to rise, have a distraction up your sleeve. You can change the subject, interrupt with the suggestion of going for a walk or find a way to remove one of them from the conversation. A good distraction I have seen work many times is asking 'can anyone smell popcorn?' This is such a tangent that it shifts the focus away from any escalating tension.

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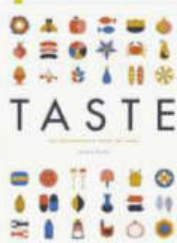


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FOOD & DRINK

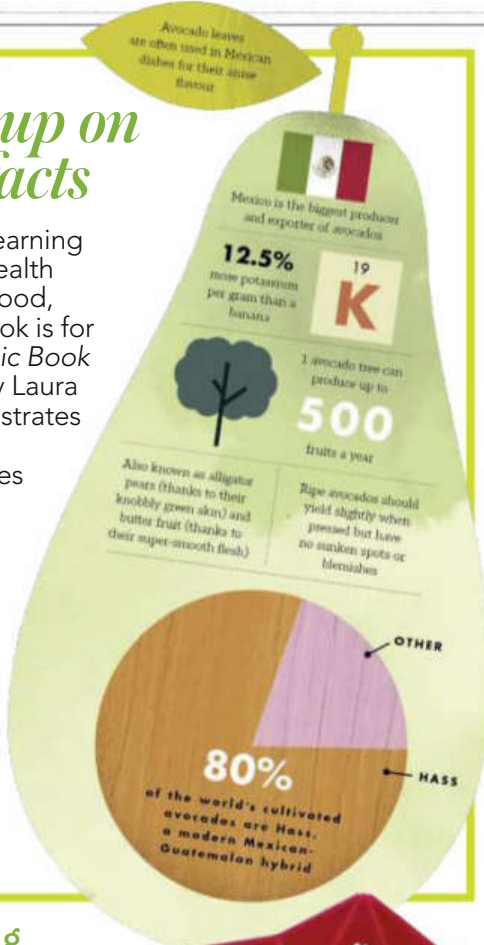
Your eats, treats and gadgets for a healthy November.



Sweet up on food facts

If you love learning about the health benefits of food, this witty book is for you. *Taste: The Infographic Book Of Food* (Aurum Press) by Laura Rowe and Vicki Turner illustrates different fruit, vegetables and store cupboard staples in a series of bright and bold pictures.

This avocado infographic (right) highlights that butter fruit – as it's also known – has 12.5 per cent more potassium per gram than a banana, meaning it helps your body balance the salt that you consume, keeping your heart healthy.



Pass the peanuts

After resistance training, you must replenish your body with protein. These Meridian Peanut Bars contain 52 per cent peanuts and 8g of protein each, which will help your muscles repair and give you an energy boost. Flavours include cocoa and berry. £1.19,

BOOST YOUR GOOD BACTERIA

Kefir is a fermented milk drink that is becoming increasingly popular because it contains good bacteria and yeasts, which help keep your gut healthy. Kefir can taste sour, but Rhythm Health Pure Coconut drinks also contain dairy-free coconut milk and either pomegranate, or mango & passion fruit to make them more palatable. £1.69, rhythmhealth.co.uk.



Celebrate veggie living

Did you know that vegetarians consume 37 per cent more fibre than meat eaters, meaning they are more likely to have healthier digestive tracts? Learn more about the benefits of a vegetarian or vegan diet at Vegfest, a weekend of talks, demos and food stalls at London Olympia, 10-11 October, and at the Glasgow SECC, 5-6 December. vegfest.co.uk.

Spice up your snack

Cosy nights in demand popcorn, and making your own is easy with this silicone PopTop. Put five tablespoons of kernels in the base, add your own flavours such as pepper or cinnamon, fold the concertina-like lid then place in the microwave for three minutes. At just 30 calories per cup, it's a healthy snack choice. No wonder the average Brit munches 5kg of popcorn a year! £25, debenhams.com.

Make homemade, microwaved popcorn without the usual additives.



FOOD TO SUIT YOU

JUST DESSERTS



Say yes to
rhubarb fool!
See page 106



There are plenty of benefits to cutting down on sugar, but you can still enjoy the sweet taste of dessert, just in a healthier, low-sugar way thanks to these recipes from nutritionist and dietician Sarah Schenker.

SUGAR CAN BE FOUND in just about everything we eat these days. While we may not sweeten our tea or coffee, the increase in 'stealth sugar', which is added to most processed foods including savoury staples such as soups and dressings, means we're each eating 70 pounds every year – an amount that's tripled over the past 50 years.

To sate our desire for sugar, even the fruit and vegetables we buy today, such as strawberries, apples and broccoli, are bred to be sweeter than the varieties grown decades ago. But the biggest increase in our consumption has come, in part, as a result of our previous obsession with fat. Some 20 years ago when health advice focused on the risks of eating too much fat, manufacturers began to strip as much of it as they could from their products in a bid to appear healthy, and instead added sugar. This was largely to bolster the taste, as low-fat foods aren't as palatable. It's sugar, not fat, that has contributed to the global

obesity crisis we now face, as increased consumption has led to a sharp rise in metabolic syndrome, which is a resistance to insulin that can eventually lead to type 2 diabetes.

Excess sugar consumption is also linked to the storage of fat around your vital organs and on your midriff, placing you at risk of liver and heart disease. And, as you'll have read in our gut feature on page 18, excess sugar in your diet can cause candida to flourish, killing off the good bacteria in your gut.

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF SUGAR

The average adult eats 21 teaspoons of sugar per day – about four times the new recommended guideline set by the UK government of no more than 5-6 teaspoons per day for a woman. Although we need a certain amount of sugar in our diets to fuel our brain and other organs, this can easily be obtained from fruits and vegetables.

The official line has always been that sugar is not addictive, but others beg to

differ. Sugar can trigger powerful cravings that affect your behaviour in a negative way and lead to unhealthy eating patterns. You might think a handful of biscuits will help you through an energy slump, or that going without it makes you tired, grumpy and downright miserable, but the opposite is actually true. You probably tend to eat sugar when feeling stressed or sad, but the euphoric feeling it creates in that instant of eating it never lasts, and you can end up feeling even more lethargic. Cutting down on sugar will keep your blood sugar levels stable, preventing that afternoon slump from occurring in the first place, and resulting in more stable energy levels throughout the day.

But there are ways to satisfy your sweet tooth without having a total carb crash. Incorporating fats and protein into healthy versions of your favourite desserts will prevent the natural sugars being absorbed so quickly into your blood stream, and keep you feeling fuller for longer. Read on to discover dessert recipes that do just that...

5 STEPS TO HELP REDUCE YOUR SUGAR INTAKE

1 CUT DOWN GRADUALLY Halve your sugar intake each week until you have drastically reduced it. For example, if you usually have a couple of biscuits with your tea, change to a couple of oatcakes spread with soft cheese or peanut butter. If you like to snack on cereal bars, change to a handful of mixed nuts with dried fruit. Buy plain yoghurt instead of fruit varieties, which often contain up to seven teaspoons of sugar. Then add your own honey or maple syrup, gradually reducing to no more than a drizzle.

When you first cut down on sugar, you're likely to feel irritable and more tired than usual. You may experience the odd headache but after a week you'll start to feel better and cravings will fade. After six weeks, you should experience the natural sweetness in foods, including vegetables such as carrots, because your palate will have returned to its natural state.



2 EAT A LOW GLYCEMIC (GI) DIET Swap white pasta and breads for wholegrains such as brown basmati rice, quinoa and oats. These will slow the speed at which sugar gets into your system, keeping blood sugar and energy levels constant, making you less likely to crave an instant sugar hit. Eating protein at each meal, such as meat, fish, dairy or pulses, will also keep blood sugar stable because protein breaks down more slowly and keeps you fuller for longer.

3 EAT REGULAR, BALANCED MEALS Doing so will keep your blood sugar levels steady so you won't be hit by a sugar slump in the mid-morning or afternoon. A balanced diet is one based on green veg and starchy ones such as potatoes, parsnips and squash,



gluten-free grains, moderate amounts of fruit (1-2 pieces a day), protein-rich foods at each meal, a little dairy and hardly any salt or sugar. A typical dinner might include a chicken and veg stir-fry.

4 KEEP A FOOD DIARY Carefully checking the ingredients, note down exactly what sugary foods you eat, what time you crave them and any mood changes you experience over the day. This will help you understand what triggers your cravings, whether it's tiredness, stress or hormonal, and plan better for how to beat them by being prepared with healthy snack choices.

5 GET PLENTY OF SLEEP The more tired you are, the more your body craves sugar to give you an energy boost. While you're weaning yourself off sugar, aim to get 7-8 hours of good quality sleep per night (see *Simply Sleep Well* on page 40).



NUT AND SEED ENERGY BARS

These are a great snack after a strenuous workout. They deliver plenty of protein and carbohydrate needed to aid recovery of the muscles, as well as high levels of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that the body needs, to replace those used up during exercise.

Makes 18

Prep time: 10 mins

Cooking time: 30 mins in freezer, 30 mins in fridge

Per portion: 126 kcal, 527 kJ, 8g fat, 3g sats, 3g monos, 1g polys, 0.1g salt

- Medjool dates 5
- Dried cherries 60g
- Uncooked quinoa 60g
- Almonds 60g
- Pistachios 60g

- Flax seeds 2 tbsp
- Coconut oil 2 tbsp
- Cacao nibs 120g

1 Place everything except the cacao nibs into a blender and pulse a few times to make a rough, sticky mixture. Remove from the blender and divide into 18 evenly sized balls.

2 Take an ice cube tray and press each ball into the mould. Place in the freezer for 30 mins. Meanwhile, melt the cacao nibs in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water.

3 Remove the tray from the freezer and top each cube with 1 tsp of the melted cacao. Place in the fridge for 30 mins until the cacao has set.

10 SUPER FOODS FOR A LOW-SUGAR DIET

BERRIES Fresh blackberries, blueberries and cranberries in particular have the lowest overall sugar content of all fruits, and also have a low GI. Sprinkle onto porridge, unsweetened cereals or yoghurt.

GREEK YOGHURT The natural sugar in dairy products is called lactose. Greek or strained yoghurts have a lower lactose and higher protein content, which makes them even less sweet and more satisfying and filling.

AVOCADO Virtually sugar free, avocados are also rich in healthy fats as well as the powerful antioxidant vitamins A, C and E.

DRIED APRICOTS These can be used in baking to replace sugar. They have a low GI and are a concentrated source of minerals including calcium, iron and magnesium.

STARCHY VEG Pumpkin, butternut squash and sweet potatoes can help to satisfy a craving for sweetness without delivering too much sugar. They fall somewhere

between the sweetness of fruit and bitterness of some vegetables.

BEANS AND PULSES These contain high levels of fibre, which helps slow the absorption of sugar into your bloodstream to avoid spikes. If you're planning on having a pudding, make sure your meal includes beans.

NUTS AND SEEDS A great snack choice, each handful will give you protein, essential fats, fibre and plenty of vitamins and minerals.

QUINOA This has the lowest GI compared with other grains and a higher protein content so it helps you feel full.

MINT Add fresh mint to water or try mint tea. The strong mint taste clashes with sugar so you won't fancy anything sweet.

CINNAMON Cinnamon has been linked to lowering blood sugar levels. Some studies show it may do this by stopping the resistance to insulin.





COURGETTE AND PUMPKIN SEED MUFFINS

These muffins make the perfect snack between meals when you are hungry but want to avoid a sugar rush/slump. They are high in fibre so will help you feel satisfied and reduce cravings later. The pumpkin seeds are a good source of essential fats and vitamin E, needed for good immunity.

Makes 12

Prep time: 15 mins

Cooking time: 15 mins

Per portion: 170 kcal, 711 kJ,
8g fat, 4g sats, 2g monos, 1g polys,
0.1g salt

- Butter 3 tbsp
- Courgette 1
- Apple 1
- Egg 1
- Orange 1, juiced
- Spelt flour 300g
- Baking powder 1 tsp
- Mixed spice 1 tsp
- Pumpkin seeds 50g

- 1 Preheat the oven to 220°C/gas 7. Line a muffin tray with muffin cases.
- 2 Melt the butter in a small pan. Grate the courgette and apple into a bowl. Beat the egg and orange juice, then stir into the grated courgette and apple. Add the melted butter and stir well.
- 3 Sieve the flour, baking powder and mixed spice into a separate bowl and gradually stir the wet mixture into the dry mixture until sticky and well combined. Stir in the pumpkin seeds.
- 4 Divide the cake mixture among the muffin cases. Bake in the oven for 12-15 mins, or until a skewer inserted into the centre of the muffins comes out clean.

NO CARB WAFFLES

These waffles make a great brunch. The higher protein content from the eggs means they will fill you up more quickly than ordinary waffles. Coconut flour is gluten free and higher in fibre, protein and good fats than white wheat flour. It also has a lower GI so can help stabilise blood sugar levels.

Makes 2 waffles
Prep time: 5 mins
Cooking time: 5 mins
Per portion: 232 kcal, 971 kJ, 18g fat, 12g sats, 2g monos, 1g polys, 0.3g salt

- Eggs 1 whole, plus 2 whites
- Coconut flour 2 tbsp
- Milk 2 tbsp
- Baking powder ½ tsp
- Strawberries to serve

1 Whip 2 of the egg whites to stiff peaks. Stir in the coconut flour, milk, baking powder and the whole egg. Heat up your waffle iron to the highest temperature, and grease it with nonstick spray. Pour in the batter, and cook in the waffle iron until browned, for about 3-4 mins. Serve with the strawberries, and a little crème fraîche (optional).



RHUBARB FOOL

This healthy version of fool cleverly uses crème fraîche and egg whites to replace the traditional double cream, so boosting the protein content while reducing the calories, but also giving it a lovely thick, creamy texture. The passion fruit and ginger offset the tartness of the rhubarb, so there's no need for added sugar, and the hazelnuts provide some crunch.

Serves 4
Prep time: 10 mins
Cooking time: 5 mins
Per portion: 211 kcal, 883kJ, 20g fat, 10g sats, 7g monos, 1g polys, 0.1g salt

- Rhubarb 500g, trimmed and cut into small chunks
- Fresh ginger 1 knob, peeled and finely chopped
- Orange 1, zested and juiced
- Lemon 1, zested and juiced
- Eggs 2 whites
- Crème fraîche 150g
- Passion fruit 1
- Hazelnuts 2 tbsp

1 Place the rhubarb, ginger and orange and lemon juice and zest into a pan and bring to the boil. Allow to boil for 4-5 mins until the rhubarb is soft.
2 Whisk the egg whites in a bowl until they form stiff peaks. Carefully fold in the crème fraîche, 1 tbsp at a time. Remove the rhubarb from the pan using a slotted spoon so that you don't have too much liquid and gently fold through the crème fraîche mixture. Dot with the passion fruit seeds and sprinkle on the hazelnuts.



These gluten-free waffles are higher in fibre than regular wheat-based ones



KEY LIME SWIRL

It is often assumed that granola is a healthy choice, but the fact that sugar can be used to form the clusters is overlooked. This recipe uses egg white, which effectively does the same job as the sticky sugar without the high calorie count. The oats, walnuts and wheatgerm are a good source of fibre and protein and will release their energy slowly, avoiding a sugar spike. The Greek yoghurt and pistachio nuts provide more protein and important minerals, including calcium and selenium.

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 mins

Cooking time: 50 mins

Per portion: 456 kcal, 1908 kJ, 28g fat, 9g sats, 11g monos, 12g polys, 0.4g salt

For the granola:

- Rolled oats 250g
- Walnuts 100g, chopped
- Toasted wheatgerm 1 tbsp
- Olive oil 2 tbsp
- Cinnamon 1 tsp
- Egg white 1 large

For the swirls:

- Lime 1, zested and juiced
- Greek yoghurt 500g
- Pistachio nuts 75g

1 To make the granola, preheat your oven to 150°C/gas 3. Combine all the ingredients except the egg white in a large bowl, tossing to coat evenly. Whisk the egg white in a small bowl until frothy. Stir into the granola mixture, distributing it throughout. Spread it thinly onto a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 50 mins. About halfway through the baking time, use a large spatula to turn over sections of the granola carefully. When it is evenly browned and feels dry to the touch, transfer to the cooling rack. Cool completely before breaking up into clusters.

2 To make the swirls, stir the lime juice into the yoghurt. Take four glass bowls and place a layer of granola clusters in each. Top with 1 tbsp of yoghurt, 1 tsp of nuts and a grating of zest. Repeat the process and then gently swirl everything together. Chill before serving.

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COOKING WITH coconut

As a nation we've gone nuts for coconut oil. Not only is it versatile, and can be used in both sweet and savoury dishes, it's full of health-boosting properties, as Lucy Bee explains.

A FAMILY FRIEND SENT us some coconut oil and *The Coconut Oil Miracle* book by Bruce Fife, back in 2007. The first thing my mum cooked with the new jar of oil was a fried egg. As she dished up her experiment, she waited for us to complain about how our eggs tasted. However, we didn't notice, and so began our family journey of cooking with coconut oil.

What I find amazing is that the coconut taste tends to get lost when you cook with it. This means you shouldn't end up with a coconut-flavoured version of all your favourite foods! It's not only perfect for frying

eggs, but onions, garlic, meats or fish too, and you only need a teeny amount. And it's ideal for roasting. You can smear it over meats or fish and toss your vegetables in it, all with wonderful results.

Coconut oil can also be used as a replacement for butter in baking, which is great news if you are lactose intolerant. Its sweetness means you will be able to cut down on the sugar in your recipe by a third, too, making your cakes instantly healthier.

How coconuts boosts health

We need fats for fuel and they are crucial for our health, but it's important that we eat the right kinds to really maximise

the efficiency of our body. Coconut oil has myriad health benefits. It's a saturated fat, made up of medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs). All fats are made up of chains, the length of which determines how the body breaks them down and uses them. Your body deals with MCFAs incredibly efficiently. They are easily digested, metabolised and converted to ketones, a stable source of energy for your brain. Coconut oil is also composed of 48 per cent lauric acid, which gets turned into antiviral and antibacterial monolaurin.

There isn't a set amount of coconut oil you should eat each day, but I aim for between one and three tablespoons to replace existing cooking oils.



PAN-FRIED MARINATED SALMON WITH WILTED BABY SPINACH

Salmon is not only incredibly good for your body, skin and hair, thanks to the omega-3 fatty acids, but also really quick to prepare. This simple marinade really lifts the salmon fillets too.

Serves 2

- Salmon fillets 2
- Lucy Bee coconut oil 20g
- Baby spinach leaves 80g

For the marinade

- Ginger thumb-sized piece, peeled
- Garlic clove 1, peeled
- Tamari (gluten-free soy sauce) 20ml
- Lime 1, juiced

1 Blitz together the ginger, garlic, tamari and lime juice in a food

processor. Place the salmon fillets in a bowl, cover with the mixture and leave to marinate for 30 mins.

2 Melt the coconut oil in a heavy-based frying pan, then add the salmon skin-side down, along with the marinade, and fry for about 8 mins, turning halfway through.

3 Remove and place onto serving plates and keep warm. Add the spinach to the pan and cook until wilted, for 3-4 mins. Add the spinach to the plates alongside the salmon and serve with either rice or quinoa and cherry tomatoes.

VARIATION For an alternative marinade, use 1 tsp sumac (a tangy spice), 1 tsp toasted fennel seeds and the zest and juice of 1 lime.



TARRAGON ROAST CHICKEN

This is the perfect alternative to Sunday roasts and is a real treat for family dinners come the end of the week. I just love the French-style creamy sauce, which tastes delicious with mash. Perfect for indulging!

Serves 4

- Chicken 1, about 1.5kg
- Lucy Bee coconut oil 50g
- Lemon ½
- Tarragon 1 large bunch
- Himalayan salt and ground black pepper
- Chives, chopped

For the sauce

- Shallots 6, finely chopped
- Garlic clove 1, crushed
- White wine vinegar 150ml
- Chicken stock 200ml
- Dijon mustard 3 tsp
- Single cream 60ml
- Tarragon 20g leaves, chopped

1 Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. Prepare the chicken for roasting by rubbing it all over with the coconut oil. Put the chicken in a roasting tray and place the lemon half and tarragon inside the chicken. Season well, transfer to the oven and roast for 1¼-1½ hours, or until the juices run clear when the thickest part of the leg is pierced with a skewer. Remove the chicken from the roasting tray and keep warm.

2 Place the tray over a medium heat and add the shallots, garlic and vinegar. Cook until softened, scraping any tasty bits from the bottom.

3 Add the chicken stock and mustard, stir together and reduce for about 5 mins. Gradually add the cream and warm through before sprinkling in the chopped tarragon.

4 Carve the chicken. Serve with the tarragon sauce, sprinkled with chopped chives and accompanied by either roast potatoes or potato and celeriac mash and steamed broccoli.



*Lamb is rich in iron,
zinc and selenium
for a healthy
immune system*

LAMB AND SPINACH KORAI

This dish is a great comfort food for a cold night in, especially after a long afternoon walk. Pop it in the oven before you go, so you'll return to an enticing aroma!

Serves 4

- Lucy Bee coconut oil 150g
- Onions 550g, chopped
- Tinned tomatoes 400g
- Water 120ml
- Ginger 50g, peeled and chopped
- Garlic cloves 65g, chopped
- Boneless shoulder or leg of lamb 900g, cut into 4cm cubes
- Himalayan salt 1 tsp
- Ground turmeric 1 tbsp
- Chilli powder 1 tbsp
- Ground cumin 1 tbsp
- Paprika 1 tbsp

- Ground coriander 1 tbsp
- Spinach leaves 350g
- Medium green chillies 4, stalks removed, left whole
- Coriander 50g, chopped
- Garam masala spice mix ½ tbsp

- 1 Heat the coconut oil in a large, heavy-based pan. Add the onions and cook over a medium heat for 20 mins, stirring now and then, until soft and light brown.
- 2 Put the tomatoes, water, ginger and garlic into a food processor and blend until smooth. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the cooked onions to the paste and blend until smooth.
- 3 Return the paste to the coconut oil left in the pan, then stir in the lamb and salt. Simmer for 30 mins, then

stir in the turmeric, chilli powder, cumin, paprika and ground coriander and cook until the lamb is tender. Time for 30-45 mins if using shoulder or 45-60 if using leg. Add a little water if the sauce starts to stick.

4 Put half the spinach leaves into a large pan and cook until wilted. Blitz, with a little water, in a food processor to a smooth purée. Add to the sauce with the remaining spinach leaves and cook for 2 mins.

5 Rinse out the food processor, tip in the whole chillies and 2-3 tbsp water and blend until smooth. Taste the curry and add as much chilli purée as you wish, depending on how hot you like it. Alternatively, put a bowl of chilli purée on the table and allow each person to add their own.

6 Stir in the coriander and garam masala, then serve.

MARINATED TOFU STIR-FRY WITH KELP NOODLES AND ASIAN GREENS

This is my ultimate mid-week meal as it's packed full of flavour and goodness. Kelp noodles are popular in Asian cooking and work brilliantly with fragrant or spicy dishes. They're also a nutritional powerhouse, so dish up and dose up on your vitamins!

Serves 2-4

- **Firm tofu** 200g, cut into 2cm cubes
- **Kelp noodles or rice noodles** 200g
- **Lucy Bee coconut oil** 30g
- **Spring onions** 8, cut into matchsticks
- **Red pepper** 1, deseeded and sliced
- **Green pepper** 1, deseeded and sliced
- **Pak choi or tat soi** 1, chopped, or a mixture
- **Ground black pepper**
- **Alfalfa sprouts** to serve

For the marinade

- **Garlic cloves** 2, crushed
- **Fresh ginger** 30g, peeled and chopped
- **Fresh horseradish** 10g, peeled and chopped
- **Sesame oil** 4 tsp
- **Tamari** 6 tsp
- **Rice wine vinegar** 40ml

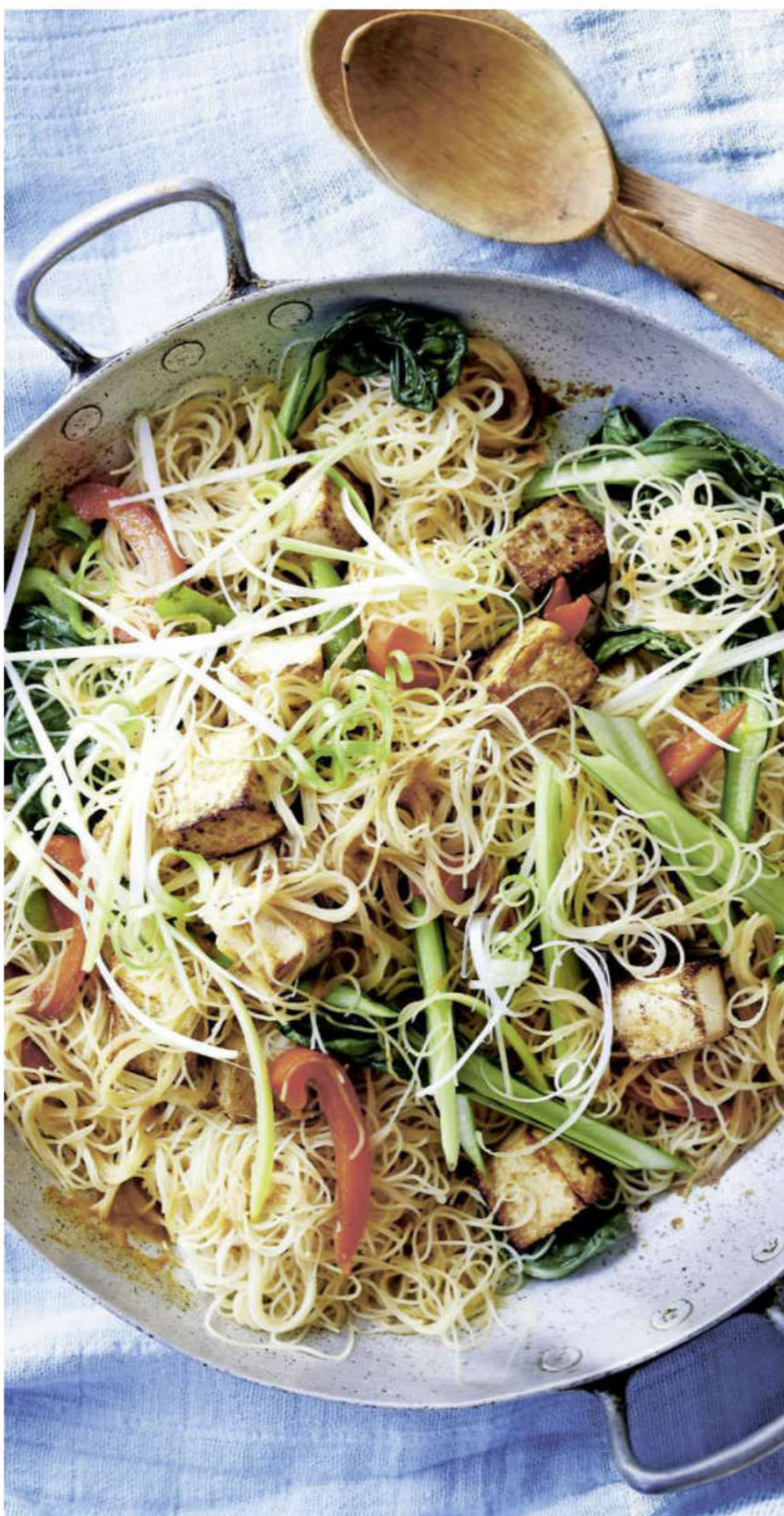
1 Blitz the marinade ingredients together in a food processor, then transfer to a bowl. Add the cubed tofu to the marinade, stir to coat, then set aside to marinate for at least 2 hours.

2 Cook the kelp or rice noodles according to the packet instructions. Once cooked, set the noodles aside. Heat the coconut oil in a wok or heavy-based frying pan, then add the tofu along with the marinade and cook for 2 mins, stirring occasionally. Add the spring onions, peppers and pak choi or tat soi, and cook for 3 mins.

3 Submerge the noodles in cold water for 1 min, then drain and stir into the tofu and veg, mixing until the noodles are coated in sauce. Add pepper to taste and serve with a scattering of alfalfa sprouts.



Recipes from *Coconut Oil* by Lucy Bee (Quadrille, £15).
Photography by Ria Osborne.





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Focus on PUMPKIN SEEDS

Whether scooped from your jack-o-lantern or bought fresh from the shops, pumpkin seeds are at their seasonal best now.

SEEDS ARE A SNACK favourite for many. Full of heart-healthy omega-3s and packed with fibre to fill you up, it's no wonder these edible pips make up a tenth of all savoury nibbles consumed in the UK. Right now, you can't miss pumpkins – these colourful orange fruits are synonymous with autumn – and their seeds are top of the crop when it comes to nutrition, namely for their zinc content. Pumpkin seeds in their shell contain around 10mg zinc per 100g, which is a vital mineral for keeping your immune system strong. Levels of zinc in your body fluctuate according to oestrogen levels, and a study published in the *Journal of Medical Hypotheses* proved that a zinc supplement helped to ease cramps for women on their period. After menopause, increasing your zinc intake from the usual 8mg a day to 13mg – equivalent to 130g or a cup of pumpkin seeds – reduces the risk of developing osteoporosis by bolstering bone formation.

There's good news for bladder health too. An amino acid in the seeds, arginine, increases nitric oxide production, which if in short supply makes your bladder hyperactive, resulting in more frequent, unpredictable urination. A Japanese study¹ showed that women who used supplements with pumpkin seed extract had a 67 per cent decrease in incontinence episodes.



↑
*Soak seeds first to
activate their enzymes*

Pumpkin seeds also contain high levels of magnesium, at 262mg per 100g. Magnesium helps your body to use proteins and fats, and helps insulin to effectively control the levels of glucose you store. Low magnesium levels are associated with insulin resistance, which leads to weight gain.

As well as the benefits mentioned, for each 100g of pumpkin seeds you eat, you also get 19g protein, 77mg omega-3 fatty acids, 55mg calcium, 110 per cent of your recommended daily intake of blood-boosting iron and 25 per cent of your DV in manganese, which is vital for skin and bone health.

Try the oil too

Pumpkin seed oil is a popular culinary addition to Middle and Eastern European cooking, and is a vital export for Austria and Slovenia. The oil is dark green or red in colour, has a nutty taste and is rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids, which reduce levels of bad cholesterol (LDL). It's most often drizzled onto soup or over salads, or combined with natural yoghurt to make a bright green delicacy called 'green gold'. Try Slovenian 100% Pumpkin Seed Oil for £9.95, yumbls.com.

HOW TO USE THEM

1 Sweet snack: Scoop out 250g seeds from your pumpkin, wash them, and spread them out on foil or baking paper. Gently melt together 30g coconut butter or nut oil, 65g honey, and 1 tsp sea salt. Pour it over the seeds and cook in the oven at 150°C for 20 mins. When cooled, enjoy as an energy-boosting nibble.

2 Spicy topper: With a pestle and mortar or food processor, bash up 100g pumpkin seeds, 50g pine nuts,

50g chia seeds, 3 tsp dried chillies, 1 tsp cracked black pepper and 2 tsp coarse sea salt, and use it as a warming, superfood garnish for soup, salads or stews.

3 Herby pumpkin brittle: Blitz 125g pumpkin seeds, 1 tsp salt, 2 tbsp fresh rosemary and 1 tsp cayenne pepper. In a clean bowl, whisk 1 egg white until foamy, fold into the seed mix, spread thinly onto a baking tray and bake on 190°C for 20 mins or until crisp. Break into pieces around 5x5cm and serve with soups or cheese.



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YOUR VIEWS

WORKING TOWARDS BEATING ECZEMA

I've lived and battled with eczema for most of my life and thought I had read everything there was to read about this painful and debilitating condition. But, your article *Eczema Uncovered* (September) uncovered new information that I was unaware of and

I'm trying your recommendations. I'm looking forward to the day when I no longer feel like I want to hide myself away from people. Thank you for helping me work towards that day.

Josie Drurie, Flintshire



REDUCING THE SWEET STUFF

Recently I noticed I was becoming more and more reliant on sugar to pick me up when I was feeling tired. But, as the effects were always short lived, I found I was having to eat lots more sugary snacks to keep me going, so I decided to cut back.

I started by cutting out my daily chocolate bar, then the two teaspoons of sugar I had in my coffee, and after a hellish week I started to notice a difference in my energy levels. This inspired me to check the sugar content on the labels of the foods I usually buy. I was astounded to discover such high amounts in some of my favourite foods, such as tomato sauce, orange squash and baked beans. I've since started making my own versions of these using natural, unprocessed ingredients and have found I actually prefer them!

My taste buds have adapted too, so if I eat chocolate or cake now, I find they are too sweet. I still haven't managed to cut out all sugar but am slowly getting there, and my energy levels are through the roof!

Mary Swanson, Birmingham

RUNNING MAKES ME FEEL GOOD

I started running 18 months ago to de-stress from the rigours of life. As my 10-minute jogs around the block progressed, I started attending my local parkrun, which is a free, weekly, 5km timed run, held worldwide. In 12 months I've completed almost 40 parkruns.

With my newfound confidence, I joined my local running club in April, and I've since entered races; run for my club, won county championship awards and prizes in my age category.

I now run an average of five times a week, and I have a gruelling training schedule

planned for this winter, as my next challenge is to run my first marathon in Brighton next spring.

I wish I'd known earlier in life how much I love running and how good it makes me feel. But at the age of 45, I'm the fittest, healthiest and certainly less stressed that I have ever been.

Melody-Anne Neville, Suffolk



Melody-Anne with husband André after completing the Alton Water 10k run.



Congratulations Melody-Anne, you've won a Malki Dead Sea gift set from Boots.com, which includes a Black Mud Mask Soap, Dead Sea Bath Salts and Dead Sea Body Scrub with Frankincense Oil.

DITCHING THE CLUTTER

The *Declutter Your Life* (October) article inspired me to have a good old clear out. I tackled an overflowing bookcase first, giving all but a handful of books to the local charity shop and selling the bookcase, which was taking up a lot of space in a narrow hallway. I've also built up quite a collection of bits and bobs in the loft, so every day I am getting something down and either selling it or giving it away. I now have a tidier house, and my mind is free from thinking about the clear out I should be doing.

Sonia Smythe, Notts



YOU TOLD US YOUR TOP TIPS FOR STAYING YOUTHFUL

● I exercise and eat healthily and always wear red lipstick when I dress up!

Mary Cassidy

● A positive outlook, whatever life throws at me, plus healthy eating and exercise. **Sue Morris**

● I use Salcura Zeoderm Skin Repair moisturiser to prevent my skin from becoming too dry or dehydrated. **Chloe Voller**

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MY LIFE IN HEALTH

Jane Seymour

The Hollywood actress on steering clear of diets, keeping her heart healthy and staying youthful at 64.

If I tell myself I'm on a diet, I spend all day thinking about what I'm not allowed. It becomes a terrible obsession and it doesn't work. I'm much better off looking at quantities, I'm a moderation person. So if I really want to taste a dessert, I eat half of it and leave the rest. If I really want potatoes, I'll have one, not 10. If I fancy a pasta dish, I'll mostly eat the protein and definitely have something green to accompany it. This way, I can maintain my weight without telling myself I'm calorie counting or on a diet.

I'm an occasional wine or Champagne person but rarely drink spirits. I only occasionally eat red meat, as I prefer chicken, fish and a lot of fresh fruit and vegetables. Twiglets and Maltesers are my weaknesses when I'm in the UK, but at home in California I never really have to worry about my weight because it never occurs to me to have cups of tea with chocolate biscuits.

I like to exercise by doing something I enjoy. I love going for fast walks on the beach or a hike with a friend – anything that takes my mind

off the fact that I am actually exercising! I see a trainer three times a week. I do at least 20 minutes on a spinning bike as well as using light weights and a TRX resistance band. Afterwards I do Pilates and gyrotonics [a more 360° version of reformer Pilates], mainly to strengthen my core and prevent back issues. It's difficult to fit exercise in when I'm on the road, but, whenever I can, I do moves such as the plank, bridge and some press-ups, which I can do in a hotel room.

I'm a stickler for making sure technique is right. A lot of people arrive at the gym or at a class and just throw themselves into it and get injured. I have an understanding of what my body will and won't do and how far to take it. I think some people just copy the person next to them but end up doing more harm than good. Unless you work out correctly, it's pointless doing it at all.

JANE'S TIPS FOR A HAPPY, HEALTHY LIFE

- 1 Always practice gratitude and forgiveness.
- 2 Realise that the only things you take with you when you die are the love you shared and the difference you made. That's why I feel if you live with an open heart and mind you can overcome anything.
- 3 Keep a positive attitude. So many doctors have told me that stress is what kills you faster than anything.



A brisk walk on the beach is one of Jane's ways to get her heart pumping.



Everything in moderation is key to Jane's healthy lifestyle.

My doctor told me I was as healthy as any human can be.

I'm very fortunate and I want to stay healthy for as long as possible. I'll always remember the time I had an anaphylactic shock and nearly didn't survive. I had an out of body experience where I saw myself being resuscitated, and I remember thinking, 'There's me and there's the body I have the privilege of being in. If I don't take care of it it'll break down sooner'. Next thing I knew I was back in my body. So, although I may now get aches and pains and might have certain genetic predispositions, I'm so grateful for my health. I listen to my body for what it needs, and try to do the best I can for it.

In terms of beauty, I'm a great believer in exfoliating, moisturising and applying SPF.

Every morning I exfoliate my face and body with Crepe Erase scrubs and use their eye serum. Someone asked me whether I'd had dermabrasion or a laser treatment because my skin looks so much softer and the wrinkles have gone since using them! Although I love to look as young as I can, I still want to look like me. A lot of people seem to be going for the rubber face look at the moment and doing things that make them look odd, but that way you miss out on human expression and a natural glow.

WORDS: JO DUNBAR. PHOTOGRAPHS: REX FEATURES, SCOPEFEATURES. CREPE ERASE® IS AVAILABLE FROM CREPEERASE.CO.UK.



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